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March, 2006

Students' trip to March for Life

Full of Surprises

By Steve Hohman and Josh McCarty

"I gain nothing that I ask for but everything I needed. I am among all men most richly blessed."

—Prayer of an unknown soldier

It was the fastest Mass that we had ever been to. Why? Because we were traveling at 65 M.P.H. down Interstate 64 somewhere in West Virginia. Why? Well, it wasn't the original plan, for we had planned Mass in a chapel in Washington, D.C. But that was before a slight "delay" in Morehead, Kentucky. The results were all for the glory of God. So, there we were sitting not in pews but in reclining bus seats! Fr. Andy was vested, standing at the front of the bus. We had set up the sanctuary with Charles, the bus driver's, brief case as the altar. There was a "server" for everything. One held the Chalice, two held the altar, another held the candle, and one helped keep the priest standing as the bus jostled about the highway. We had to sing songs we knew by heart and communion consisted not in the people going down the aisle to receive Jesus, but Fr. Andy going down the aisle to give Jesus to the people. None of this took away from the reverence of the Mass. For many, in

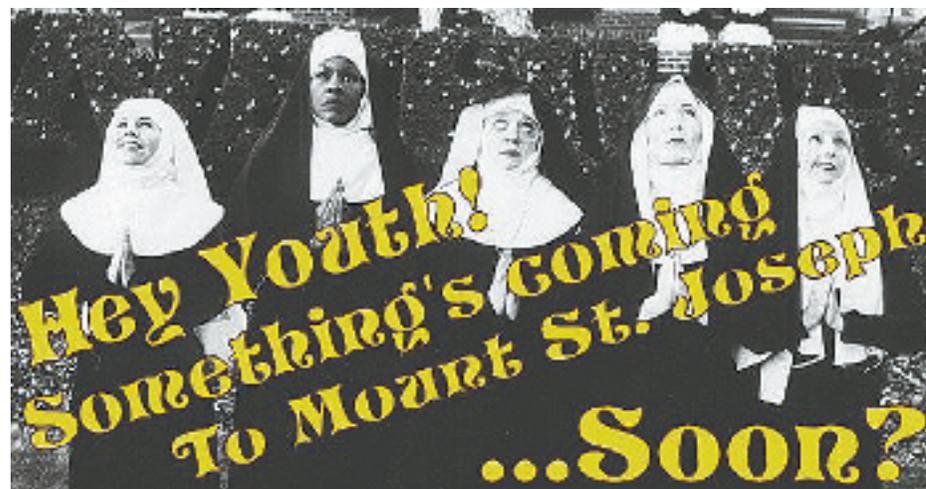
fact, it was one of the most powerful Masses of their life. Our plan was that we would have Mass at the Cathedral, but God had different plans. From the minute we broke down on the bus we knew that God was with us, but we never could have anticipated the ways He would show up.

We're going on a pilgrimage. That means, as Joe Bland, the trip coordinator, repeated many times, we should expect trial. This trip was no exception. Cramped muscles, missed meals, interrupted sleep, soaking shoes, sick students, hours of waiting, and other things just as well not mentioned. On Monday morning, Joe got up in front of the bunch on the bus and pointed out, once again, that this was a pilgrimage. From the back of the bus, you hear the comment "every time he tells us that this is a pilgrimage, it means we are going to miss another meal."

But it was all good. The inconvenience of being trapped on a bus gave us the opportunity to get to know each other better. Missing the opportunity to have Mass in a church showed us that prayer can be done anywhere, on a bus or in a parking lot. Waiting 2 hours for Mass to start gives us a great opportunity to pray the Rosary together. Sitting on the marble floor of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception through a three-hour Mass somehow shows us the blessing of attending Mass with 7,000 other people in a church that seats 4,000. Standing in the mud while it rained, the morning of the March, gave the crowd an opportunity to show their dedication to the legal



Witnessing For Life while marching up Constitution Avenue, from left, Owensboro Right to Lifer Kathy Graham, Josh McCarty in center, and Father Andy Garner. Larena Lawson Photo



rights of the unborn. It was all good because "all things work for the good of those who love God" (Romans 8:28).

It seemed that the trip offered us many chances to love God. Joe never let us forget that another essential part of a pilgrimage is prayer. We prayed on a moving bus, we prayed on a broken down bus, in a hotel, and in a Basilica, on the streets of Washington, in a restaurant, alone with our group and with thousands, with our voices and we prayed in song. In short, we prayed a lot.

For some it was the first March for Life and for others it was the fifth. When we arrived at the Mall in Washington (the lawn in front of the White House), we picked up protest signs and began the wait for the march to begin. While we were waiting, speakers stirred up the growing crowd for the Pro-Life cause. As the march began, we started to funnel onto the street. Because of the great crowd (likely around 100,000), we were not able to hear much of what the speakers said. But when the march started, what we saw was an incredible and blessed sight: Thousands and thousands of people

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Our Holy Father Asks All To Help Others Through Prayer, Penance, and Almsgiving

My Dear Friends,

Lent is upon us, and we need to spend some time considering how we will prepare for this very special time of the Church year. We start by welcoming the Catechumens and Candidates into the community of the Catholic Church, in our parishes, diocese, and the Universal Church.

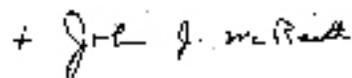
The Catechumens and Candidates will be preparing to become Roman Catholics, and to receive the Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist for the Catechumens; Confirmation and the Eucharist for the Candidates. As you know, the Candidates have already been baptized. The Catechumens and Candidates will receive the Sacraments of Initiation on Holy Saturday night, at the Easter Vigil.

We welcome them and join them in preparing for the celebration of Easter, the Paschal mystery. We together prepare for and celebrate this, the greatest Feast of the Church year – the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is important that we prepare well for the coming of Easter. This preparation will at times be individual, and at times, a community effort.

Lent is a time for special prayer, penance, and almsgiving, each essential to prepare for the great joy of Easter when Jesus shows His infinite love. For us, He suffers, dies, and then triumphs over sin and death by being raised from the dead.

I now would like to share with you the letter from our beloved Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI. He writes this beautiful Lenten message to the whole world and to each of us individually. Please take the time to read and ponder his inspiring words, which follow.

Wishing you God's blessings, I remain
Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend John J. McRaith
Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro

Lenten Message of Our Holy Father Benedict XVI for 2006

"Jesus, at the sight of the crowds, was moved with pity" (Mt 9:36)

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Lent is a privileged time of interior pilgrimage towards Him Who is the fount of mercy. It is a pilgrimage in which He Himself accompanies us through the desert of our poverty, sustaining us on our way towards the intense joy of Easter. Even in the "valley of darkness" of which the Psalmist speaks (Ps 23:4), while the tempter prompts us to despair or to place a vain hope in the work of our own hands, God is there to guard us and sustain us. Yes, even today the Lord hears the cry of the multitudes longing for joy, peace, and love. As in every age, they feel abandoned. Yet, even in the desolation of misery, loneliness, violence and hunger that indiscriminately afflict children, adults, and the elderly, God does not allow darkness to prevail. In fact, in the words of my beloved Predecessor, Pope John Paul II, there is a "divine limit imposed upon evil," namely, mercy (Memory and Identity, pp. 19ff.). It is with these thoughts in mind that I have chosen as my theme for this Message the Gospel text: "Jesus, at the sight of the crowds, was moved with pity" (Mt 9:36).

In this light, I would like to pause and reflect upon an issue much debated today: the question of development. Even now, the compassionate "gaze" of Christ continues to fall upon individuals and peoples. He watches them, knowing that the divine "plan" includes their call, to salvation. Jesus knows the perils that put this plan at risk, and He is moved with pity for the crowds. He chooses to defend them from the wolves even at the cost of His own life. The gaze of Jesus embraces individuals and multitudes, and he brings them all before the Father, offering Himself as a sacrifice of expiation.

Continued on page 3

Ash Wednesday Collection Is Special

My Dear Friends,

The Church teaches that much of the preparation for the celebration of Easter has to do with prayer, penance, and almsgiving. A number of very special collections during Lent offer a variety of opportunities to give alms. I would like to call your attention to the Ash Wednesday special collection, which is used for outreach to the poor of the Diocese of Mandeville, Jamaica.

In previous issues of this publication, you have perhaps read a good deal about how your generosity has made a real difference in the lives of the poor in Mandeville, the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. A number of Catholics from our diocese have traveled to Mandeville to help build houses and assist the people in other ways. Those who have made the sacrifice of sharing their time and talents with the Diocese of Mandeville can tell you about the great needs present there.

As though these sisters and brothers of ours in Mandeville did not have enough suffering, they were hit repeatedly by hurricanes in this past hurricane season. This was a devastating blow, particularly considering that, in the 2004 season, Hurricane Ivan damaged at least two-thirds of their diocesan structures.

In our own country in this past year, you have been extremely generous to the tornado victims, and I am sure that you will be as generous to our Sister Diocese of Mandeville. I am so very blessed to be the Bishop of a Diocese where the faithful understand that when we do something *for the least of God's children*, we are doing it *for Jesus*. This command from God is certainly an essential part of our faith lives, and you have shown great faith by your incredible generosity.

As mentioned, there are several important collections in Lent, so this is the time to fulfill at least two commands the Church has set for us all during Lent: namely, prayer and almsgiving.

God bless each and every one of you for being so kind, good, and generous to those who are in great need even for the necessities of life. Your reward in heaven will be great; in fact, that is your reward — ETERNAL LIFE with GOD.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend John J. McRaith, Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro

Bishop McRaith's March 2006 Schedule

- 1 Ash Wednesday Mass, Cathedral, Owensboro, 6pm
- 2 Staff Mtg., CPC, 9am
- 5 Rite of Elections, Cathedral, Owensboro, 2pm
- 5 Rite of Elections, Holy Name Parish, Henderson, 7:30pm
- 12 Mass, Youth 2000, Brescia University, Owensboro, 10:30am
- 12 Mass, Charismatic Conference, Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, Maple Mount, 1pm
- 15 Confirmation, St. Rose Parish, Cloverport, 6pm
- 16 Staff Mtg., CPC, 9am
- 16 KC Vocations Dinner, Bowling Green, 5:30pm
- 18 Confirmation, St. Francis de Sales Parish, Paducah, 5pm
- 19 Scouting Awards Mass, Cathedral, Owensboro, 1:30pm
- 20 Priests' Personnel Mtg., CPC, 9:30am
- 20 Priests' Council Mtg., CPC, 1:30pm
- 20 DPC Mtg., CTK, Madisonville, 6:30pm
- 21 Keynote Address, GRADD Faith in Aging Conference, Walnut Memorial Church, Owensboro, 10:10am - 10:40am
- 22 Paducah Office Day (office at Lourdes Hospital)
- 22 Confirmation, St. Joseph Parish, Mayfield, 6pm
- 25 Confirmation, St. Ambrose Parish, Sturgis, 5:30pm
- 26 Confirmation, St. Denis Parish, Fancy Farm, 8am
- 26 Confirmation, St. Charles Parish, Bardwell, 10am
- 28 Lourdes Foundation Mtg., Paducah, 10am
- 28 Confirmation, Holy Guardian Parish, Irvington, 6pm CT, 7pm EST
- 29 Confirmation, St. Jerome Parish, Fancy Farm, 7pm
- 30 Pitino Shelter Board Mtg., 9am

Enlightened by this Paschal truth, the Church knows that if we are to promote development in its fullness, our own “gaze” upon mankind has to be measured against that of Christ. In fact, it is quite impossible to separate the response to people’s material and social needs from the fulfilment of the profound desires of their hearts. This has to be emphasized all the more in today’s rapidly changing world, in which our responsibility towards the poor emerges with ever greater clarity and urgency. My venerable Predecessor, Pope Paul VI, accurately described the scandal of underdevelopment as an outrage against humanity. In this sense, in the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, he denounced “the lack of material necessities for those who are without the minimum essential for life, the moral deficiencies of those who are mutilated by selfishness” and “oppressive social structures, whether due to the abuses of ownership or to the abuses of power, to the exploitation of workers or to unjust transactions” (ibid., 21). As the antidote to such evil, Paul VI suggested not only “increased esteem for the dignity of others, the turning towards the spirit of poverty, cooperation for the common good, the will and desire for peace,” but also “the acknowledgement by man of supreme values, and of God, their source and their finality” (ibid.). In this vein, the Pope went on to propose that, finally and above all, there is “faith, a gift of God accepted by the good will of man, and unity in the charity of Christ” (ibid.). Thus, the “gaze” of Christ upon the crowd impels us to affirm the true content of this “complete humanism” that, according to Paul VI, consists in the “fully rounded development of the whole man and

of all men” (ibid., 42). For this reason, the primary contribution that the Church offers to the development of mankind and peoples does not consist merely in material means or technical solutions. Rather, it involves the proclamation of the truth of Christ, Who educates consciences and teaches the authentic dignity of the person and of work; it means the promotion of a culture that truly responds to all the questions of humanity.

In the face of the terrible challenge of poverty afflicting so much of the World’s

Continued on page 4

Catholic Lenten Regulations

For Catholics, Lent is a season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in preparation for the renewal of baptismal promises at Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday when all are called to turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel. Lent ends just before the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday. The highpoint of the liturgical year is the Triduum, the three-day celebration of the Paschal Mystery. The Triduum begins with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, continues with the celebration of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ on Good Friday, climaxes at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday and is completed with the Liturgies of Easter Sunday. The Fifty Days of Eastertime, from Easter Sunday through Pentecost, are a time of joy and celebration for the resurrection of Christ from the dead and our baptism into the life of discipleship.

The following fasting and abstinence regulations are observed throughout Lent. Catholics should not lightly excuse themselves from these prescribed minimal penitential practices.

Lenten Regulations

• *Days of Abstinence*

Abstinence from meat is observed on Ash Wednesday (March 1), Good Friday (April 14), and all the Fridays of Lent by all Catholics 14 years of age and older.

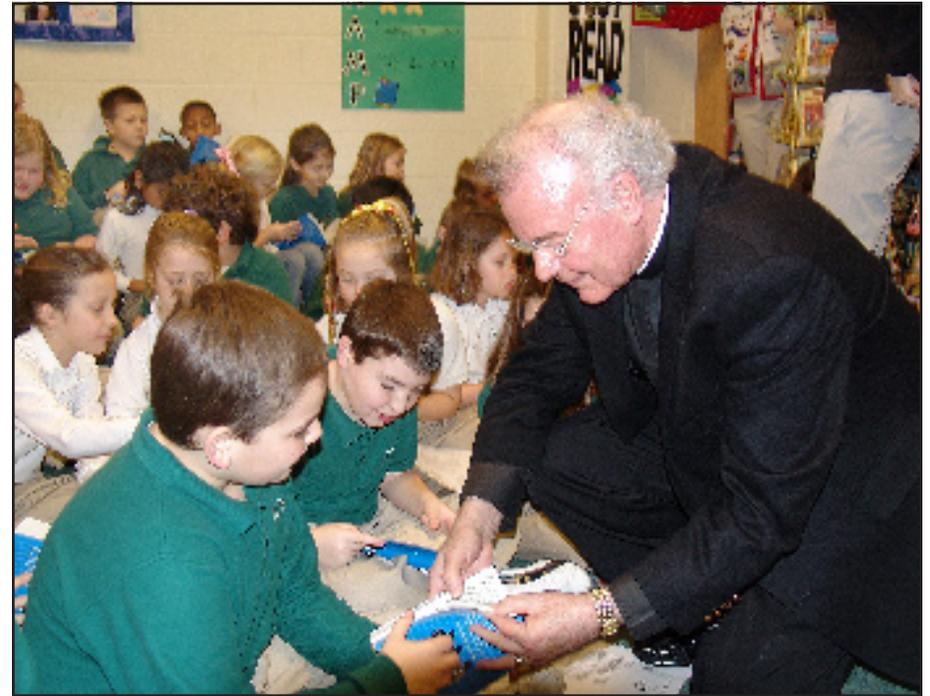
• *Days of Fasting*

Fasting is observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 60 years of age. Those bound by this rule may take only one full meatless meal. Two smaller meals are permitted as necessary to maintain strength according to one’s needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted. However, liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.

• *Easter Duty Obligation*

Those who have been initiated into the Eucharist (received First Communion) must receive Holy Communion at least once a year during the season of Easter. The time for fulfilling one’s Easter Duty extends from the first Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday. Those in serious sin are also bound to go to confession at least once a year.

During the season of Lent, we are all called to embrace penances and to perform works of charity that reflect our willingness to conversion of heart. Prayer, fasting and charitable giving are hallmarks of Catholics who enter into the season of Lent to prepare for the renewal of their baptismal commitment at Easter. In addition to what the church requires, consider how you will prepare for Easter renewal this Lenten season. May this Lent lead us all to a deeper union in Christ with one another.



Achievers

Holy Name School’s third graders were presented their very own dictionaries by the Henderson Rotary Club. President Ron Faupel asked the students to look up the word, “achieve,” and then shared with the students how they are all achievers! Pictured is Father Bradley who is a member of the local Rotary Club helping Conner Shea locate something in his dictionary. HNE Photo

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The Western Kentucky Catholic comes to your home as a direct use of your parish assessment dollars. “Those who exercise authority in the Church will take care to ensure that there is responsible exchange of freely held and expressed opinion among the People of God.”

-Pastoral Instruction Of The Means Of Social Communications, #116, Jan. 29, 1971

Opinions expressed in columns and letters to the editor submitted for publication in the Western Kentucky Catholic are not necessarily those of the publisher or editor of The Western Kentucky Catholic.

When Does The Hurting Stop?

The journey through grief is difficult...and painful. We are forever changed by a major loss experience. Clearly, we will never be the same person we were before this loss became part of our lives. The real struggle occurs when we consciously or subconsciously resist the change that must take place if we are to survive and learn to live with our loss. (It is difficult to get to know and accept this new person who is emerging.)

Grief is a complex process, unique to each individual, based on personality type, circumstances of death, and our relationship with the person who died. There are, however, emotions common to almost all bereaved persons.

Understanding is the KEY to the tolerance and patience necessary to accept and integrate loss into our lives.

There will be a bereavement support group for anyone who has experienced a death at any time of his/her life. This group will run every Tuesday for five consecutive weeks and is open to all the public at no charge.

BEREAVEMENT PROGRAM---FIVE WEEKS

WHERE: Catholic Pastoral Center

TIME: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

600 Locust Street

CONTACT: Betty Medley (270) 683-1545 ext. 105

or Charlotte Hedges (270) 683-1545 ext. 146

• **March 7** What Grief is Really Like: Some common reactions to a situation no one is ever prepared to handle. Why we feel the way we do, and why no one seems to understand.

• **March 14** Depression: Sadness, loss, and the feeling that nothing will ever be the same. Physical symptoms; healing can happen.

• **March 21** Anger: Nice people DO get angry. Recognizing our anger, coping with it and getting over it. (Address suicide and our feelings of outrage and shame.)

• **March 28** Guilt: Blaming ourselves for what has happened, handling the "what ifs" and "if onlys" ... (touch on suicide, and our responsibility or lack of it)

• **April 4** From Grief to Living Again: Putting grief in perspective, learning to share our lives with the living, and realizing that we will never get over our grief, but we can learn to live with it.

Memorial Service

Nondenominational Prayer Service At Planned Parenthood in Nashville, Tennessee

Saturday, January 7 '06 At 10:00 a.m.

All are invited to Mass at 8:00 at Fathers of Mercy in South Union, then caravan to killing center or take I-65 south through downtown Nashville, taking the W-40/65 south highway split. Then take exit 208 which is Charlotte Avenue. Make a right turn and go about 6 blocks to D. B. Todd Ave., make right turn on D. B. Todd. Planned Parenthood of Middle and Eastern Tennessee is second building on right. We will share Scripture, pray, and sing. This is not a protest demonstration but a chance to pray at Calvary where innocent blood is shed. Please join us!

Lenten Message of Our Holy Father

Benedict XVI for 2006 *(Continued from page 3)*

population, indifference and self-centered isolation stand in stark contrast to the gaze of Christ. Fasting and almsgiving, which, together with prayer, the Church proposes in a special way during the Lenten Season, are suitable means for us to become conformed to this ... gaze." The examples of the saints and the long history of the Church's missionary activity provide invaluable indications of the most effective ways to support development. Even in this era of global interdependence, it is clear that no economic, social, or political project can replace that gift of self to another through which charity is expressed. Those who act according to the logic of the Gospel live the faith as friendship with God Incarnate and, like Him, bear the burden of the material and spiritual needs of their neighbours. They see it as an inexhaustible mystery, worthy of infinite care and attention. They know that he who does not give God gives too little; as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta frequently observed, the worst poverty is not to know Christ. Therefore, we must help others to find God in the merciful face of Christ. Without this perspective, civilization lacks a solid foundation.

Thanks to men and women obedient to the Holy Spirit, many forms of charitable work intended to promote development have arisen in the Church: hospitals, universities, professional formation schools and small businesses. Such initiatives demonstrate the genuine humanitarian concern of those moved by the Gospel message, far in advance of other forms of social welfare. These charitable activities point out the way to achieve a globalization that is focused upon the true good of mankind and, hence, the path towards authentic peace. Moved like Jesus with compassion for the crowds, the Church today considers it her duty to ask political leaders and those with economic and financial power to promote development based on respect for the dignity of every man and woman. An important litmus test for the success of their efforts is religious liberty, understood not simply as the freedom to proclaim and celebrate Christ, but also the opportunity to contribute to the building of a world enlivened by charity. These efforts have to include a recognition of the central role of authentic religious values in responding to man's deepest concerns, and in supplying the ethical motivation for his personal and social responsibilities. These are the criteria by which Christians should assess the political programmes of their leaders.

We cannot ignore the fact that many mistakes have been made in the course of history by those who claimed to be disciples of Jesus. Very often, when having to address grave problems, they have thought that they should first improve this world and only afterwards turn their minds to the next. The temptation was to believe that, in the face of urgent needs, the first imperative was to change external structures. The consequence, for some, was that Christianity became a kind of moralism, 'believing' was replaced with 'doing.' Rightly, therefore, my Predecessor, Pope John Paul II, of blessed memory, observed: "The temptation today is to reduce Christianity to merely human wisdom, a pseudo-science of well-being. In our heavily secularized world, 'gradual secularization of salvation' has taken place, so that people strive for the good of man, but man who is truncated ... We know, however, that Jesus came to bring integral salvation" (Redemptoris Missio, 11).

It is this integral salvation that Lent puts before us, pointing towards the victory of Christ over every evil that oppresses us. In turning to the Divine Master, in being converted to Him, in experiencing His mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we will discover a "gaze" that searches us profoundly and gives new life to the crowds and to each one of us. It restores trust to those who do not succumb to scepticism, opening up before them the perspective of eternal beatitude. Throughout history, even when hate seems to prevail, the luminous testimony of His love is never lacking. To Mary, "the living fount of hope" (Dante Alighieri, Paradiso, XYXIII, 12), we entrust our Lenten journey, so that she may lead us to her Son. I commend to her in particular the multitudes who suffer poverty and cry out for help, support, and understanding. With these sentiments, I cordially impart to all of you a special Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 29 September, 2005.

BENEDICT XVI

Hope for the Journey

By Robin Beatty

Hope. Right now that word seems foreign. As I am sitting here writing this, the sun is shining outside on this not so cold January day. Well, at least it is in your world. My world is bleak and dark right now. And it has been for quite some time. It seems that for months I've totally isolated myself from people. The extent of my socialization has been going to Church and my child's ballgames. And if I could find an honest way to get out of those where it would cause no harm to anyone I would not do those things either.

So my world of depression has been rising now for about a year. At first I thought it was stress or just different life situations, yet there wasn't much happening differently in our lives. Life seemed to be balanced. But as the year went on, it became more obvious that it was the depression. But I kept telling myself if I could only be a little more positive, if I only prayed a little longer or more persistently, God would not seem so far away. Then my world would seem brighter and happier.

So am I doing things wrong? My mind is telling me a lot of things, but are they thoughts that are helping me or hurting me? Well, I suppose a little of both. But at this time the dark negative thoughts seem to be winning this war inside of me. The good thoughts are there sometimes, but there seems to be no energy to embark upon them. So the enemy seems to be winning.

But you know what, not anymore. I made a call today to my doctor to change my medicine. I made a medicine change back at Christmas. As my pastor at St. Mary's, Whitesville, Father Pat Bittel, spoke in his homily this past weekend, we are always gambling in life. This is my poker hand in life; sometimes I win, and sometimes I don't. At Christmas I did not win. That particular medicine change was not for the good. But I will find one that works for me. I will not give up. Jesus did not give up on me. He died on that cross for me. I will not give up on myself. There lies my hope. I may try 1 or 2 medicines before I find the right one this time, but I will find it, because I am not giving up. It has taken me several months to get to this realization, but I am here now and that's all that matters.

Hope is there for me, and when I can't find it within myself, someone may have to have it for me. That's how we don't journey alone. I've put myself in a very lonely place right now, but when that hope begins to blossom, I realize there are others out there for me, even when I am not able to be there for myself. So the times when life seems lonely and scary because of medicine changes, hang on. It's tough and terrifying, but that one more minute, that one more hour, or that one more day makes a difference. It will make a difference for me. Changing medicines is difficult, but between God, others, a new medicine; and myself there lies MY hope for this journey. Please pray for me at this time, as I will continue to pray for others who are on this particular journey with me.

A Different View

By Robin Beatty December 2005

One step...

Darkness.

Another step...

More darkness.

Your head rises...

Still darkness.

What becomes of it?

Where is it going?

Hope, Light...

Merely words.

Desire...

Desire to have desire.

It's all concealed...

Concealed in darkness.

Concealed with fate.

The fate we create,

The illusion of fate,

Is merely created in our minds.

Reality...

A different view,

A true view,

A view of Jesus,

A view of Hope.

A Hope based on Freedom.

This Freedom came alive centuries ago,

The day a Man hung on a cross.

That day freedom began.

That day the false illusion was erased.

For me, for you, for all.

That day the reality of Hope,

of Light came alive.

That day a different view took step.

This is a poem that I wrote in December at 2 different sittings. The first part merely shows how my depression totally disillusions my reality. But when the times come that I feel good about myself and my life surroundings, I live in a different world. This shows that

What's wrong with me? Nothing!- You are bereaved

By Betty Medley

When it comes to grieving, though, things are different. There are how-to books on grief. Some people may believe they can write one, and I know many bereaved who search for them, but the truth is that there is no book for your grief, your feelings, your readjustments to this new world without your loved one, the many tasks that require your attention when your energy is at its lowest. No one knows your sorrow. No one can give meaning to your feelings, and no one dare direct or control your feelings, tell you that "you should be over this by now."

Wading through the advice we are given, we often grieve in silence, puzzled and occasionally fearful of our feelings. We wonder what might be "eating away at us." we look for some ray of hope that will lead us through sorrow to life and hope. In the end, though, there is only one pathway: your pathway. It is the pathway of your feelings.

Even within one family, various individuals can have very different experiences of grief. Each person's journey is different, and his or her feelings give expression and meaning to those journeys. Each person- including you-must be free to move along his or her own pathway. Thomas Merton once remarked, "How do you expect to arrive at the end of your journey if you take the road to one's city?" Giving each person in your family the freedom that he or she needs will prevent these differences in grieving from becoming a source of conflict.

It is crucial that you ask yourself what you need to do for you. This doesn't mean that you do things at the expense of your family, but you also cannot take care of everyone else at the expense of yourself. You may already feel you have done your share of that; now is the time to be self-focused.

What do you want for you?

- *A quiet evening just to read the newspaper?
- *Time to catch up on endless chores around the house?
- *Control of the remote control for your favorite show?
- *A good night's sleep?
- *Control over your kitchen?
- *A day at work without someone asking or calling?
- *Jogging without feeling guilty for leaving the family?
- *Someone to explain all the hospital bills?
- *Peace and quiet?

Make your own list. You don't have to justify it to others. You DO have to claim it for yourself.

Youth 2000

A Eucharistic Centered Retreat

March 10,11,12, 2006

Brescia University, 717 Frederica Street,

Owensboro, Kentucky

Sponsored by the Marian Shrine Committee
and the Owensboro Diocesan Office of Youth Ministry

For more information: www.marianshrineky.org, www.owensborodio.org
1-270-683-1545, 1-270-683-6769

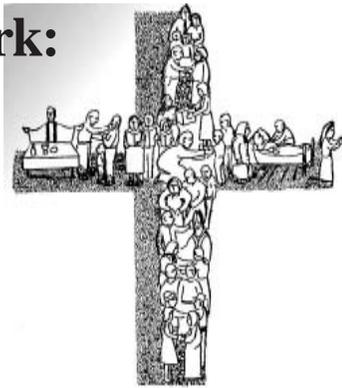
"...It is my hope that this time spent with our Lord will help you to fully appreciate Christ's presence in our lives - in the assembly, in the Word, in the Ministers, and in the Holy Eucharist. ..."

- Most Reverend John J. McRaith, Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro, Ky.

The Spirituality of Work:

How can I make meaning in the marketplace?

A workshop directed by Vinal Von Benthem



Most of us spend Monday through Saturday working, often outside our homes. What does it mean to be a Catholic Christian in the workplace? Do we work differently because of what we profess to believe? What do we believe about "work"? During this program we will take the time to look at the question many people are asking: How can I make meaning in the marketplace?

Friday and Saturday, March 24-25, 2006

To register or for more information, contact Kathy McCarty
(270) 229-0200 ext. 413 or kmccarty@maplemount.org



BEING AND DOING:
Integrating
the
Mary and Martha
in Each of Us

A Women's Retreat
with
Sister Cheryl Clemons, OSU

March 17-19, 2006



This weekend will provide an opportunity to rest from lives of service and care for others, "sit beside the Lord at his feet" and listen to him, and bring him our worries, our fatigue, even our experiences of pain and loss. Retreatants will be invited to view their lives from a holistic perspective as they reflect on the challenges of integrating being and doing and of reclaiming the primacy of relationship over tasks and things.

For a brochure or further information,
contact Kathy McCarty,
(270) 229-0200, ext. 413, or kmccarty@
maplemount.org



Marriage Tribunal Facts

What is the role of a lay advocate in the process of obtaining a Declaration of Marital Invalidity (Annulment)?

By Patty Blair, Lay Advocate

The Lay Advocate walks you through the process. Usually at the initial meeting the Lay Advocate will ask a few questions to get background and determine if there are potential grounds for a Declaration of Invalidity. Then a series of questions will help determine the grounds to be used in the petition. Sometimes the Petitioner (the one seeking the declaration) is given a questionnaire and asked to complete the questions and return them to the Advocate. Frequently, however, the Lay Advocate meets with the petitioner several times and assists them in answering the questions, helping them to delve deeper into the situation if necessary.

When the Petitioner's testimony is completed, the Lay Advocate assists the petitioner in gathering the documents necessary, such as: Baptism Certificates for Catholic parties, Marriage Certificate and Divorce Decree. The Advocate then writes a letter to the Tribunal on behalf of the Petitioner stating the reasons why the Advocate believes the case should be considered for a Declaration of Invalidity. When all the paperwork is in order, the case is filed with the Tribunal.

During the following months, questionnaires are sent to the Respondent (Petitioner's former spouse) and witnesses. The Lay Advocate is kept informed by the Tribunal of any problems or delays regarding the reception of testimony. Occasionally it is necessary for the Advocate to contact the witnesses and assist them in giving their testimony. This is important when the witnesses are unsure of what information is requested by the Tribunal. A caring and friendly Advocate can help prevent delays in the process. Many Lay Advocates have been through the process of Marital Invalidity and understand the peace that comes with an Affirmative decision. They also understand the apprehension experienced by many Petitioners when beginning the process. If you are considering applying for a Declaration of Marital Invalidity and would like to talk with a Lay Advocate, please call your local parish or the Diocesan Tribunal Office at 270-683-1545.

Find Your Feb. 2006 Catholic Digest Now! Go To Pages 112-113

Want to give the Ursuline Sisters \$5,000 without spending a penny? If you are a subscriber to Catholic Digest...here's how you can help...it'll take 3 minutes of your time. Turn to page 112-113 in the February 2006 issue (Jon Voigt's photo as John Paul II is on the cover). There you will find an explanation of the "Love Your Neighbor" award. Tear out the postpaid card, complete the information, declaring the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph as your favorite charity, and mail the postcard by August 1, 2006. During the National Catholic Development Conference (NCDC) in October, the charity that has the highest number of responses from readers will receive a check for \$5,000. Now, isn't that easy?

PRINCIPAL OPENING.

Elementary Principal opening at St. Vincent De Paul School in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Requirements: Active Catholic, Missouri certification, Master's degree in School Administration (or working towards it), administrative experience preferred, and 2-5 years of Catholic school experience. Contact: (Search Committee), St. Vincent De Paul Parish, 1913 Ritter Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

"Can you hear Me now? Dare to put out into the deep!"

The Western Kentucky Catholic, March, 2006 7

The God of Surprises

By Sister Mary Andrea Niehaus, C.P.

It was Friday evening in November 2001, and there I was, sitting on the floor in a grade school gym surrounded by hundreds of other youths – those young in body as well as those young at heart – all of us facing the "burning bush" of candles in the center surmounted by the Eucharist in a monstrance. We were there for the first YOUTH 2000 retreat (a Eucharistic centered retreat) in Evansville. This was to be my second YOUTH 2000 to attend. In fact, I was even part of the planning committee, so I thought I knew everything that would happen that weekend. "Why am I wasting my time here? Been there, done that" was more or less my attitude. I think I decided to stay because I felt obligated as a member of the team.

When I think I know God's ways of dealing with me, I am almost always surprised that God does not fit into my mold of Him! Yes, God can even surpass my idea of Him.

Friday night was good, but nothing happened that surprised me. I returned again on Saturday expecting a repeat of the previous YOUTH 2000 Saturday. Boy, was I surprised at how much God showed me that day. Gradually, God had been opening me up to what He wanted to share with me. That morning, we were broken up into small groups by age. My group leader was a young sister from the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration near Notre Dame. Sister's joy of being consecrated to Christ was very apparent and, I would say, contagious.

After one of the evening talks, all of the Religious present stayed to pray Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours. The rest of us had been dismissed to go eat supper, but were free to stay and pray with the Religious if we wanted. For whatever reason, I decided to join them at prayer. It was at this point that I had a very profound awareness and realization of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Christ truly became alive for me at that moment and gave me a sense that He had



Above, Andrea and Friends (Andrea is 2nd from left with some high school friends).



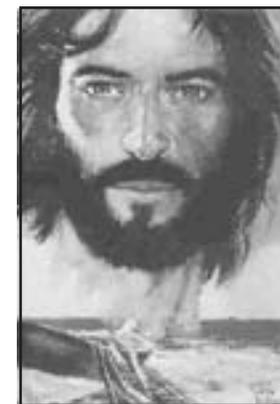
At left, Sister Mary Andrea on the day she received the holy habit. Submitted photos

chosen me to be exclusively for Him. This experience was so profound that a friend of mine who saw me afterwards asked, "Did you just see a ghost?" I had no idea what exactly this meant or where it would lead, but I knew I could not deny this and had to follow through. As I look back, there I was amidst a group of Religious and God was tugging at my heart that He wanted me as one of them.

Following the retreat, as the weeks and months passed, this experience had been so profound that it would not leave me. I knew that I would need help – both human and divine – to understand where this was leading me, but I also had a sense that I would need to push forward with this, despite op-

position, until I knew for sure what it meant. I took it upon myself to search for a spiritual director and to find out as much as possible about any and all female Religious communities. I used 'snail mail', E-mail, phone calls, retreats and visits to various monasteries over the next several years to help in my searching process. I even convinced my parents to take me to visit the Franciscans near Notre Dame (a 6 hour drive turned into 7 hours due to car trouble). As much as I tried to do things my own way and in my own time, God continued to surprise me by showing me that things must happen in His way and in His time.

After some months, I still was not sure where God was leading me, and I knew that my search was not over. One of the communities I was in contact with was the Passionist Nuns in Whitesville. Through my contact with them, I became aware that a member of their community, Sr. John Mary, had been a friend of my older sister before her entrance to the Monastery. Sister eventually invited me to attend a Consecrated Life Retreat here. My motive for agreeing to come was not too great. In fact, I only wanted to meet Sr. John



Mary. Cloistered contemplative life for me was the farthest thing from my mind. I thought, "There is no way I could ever do that." (See how God uses even the most ordinary ways to help us see His way.)

During that Consecrated Life Retreat, I had a strong feeling that St. Joseph's Passionist Monastery might be where God was leading me. Yet, I still was not ready to accept this completely. It took several more months of praying, passing E-mails, and visiting the Monastery for me to see that what was important was if this was where God was leading me, not if this were where others, including myself, wanted me to be or not to be.

Had I not stayed at that YOUTH 2000 retreat and opened myself up to what God had in store for me, I am sure that I would still be searching for the happiness that He has called each of us to experience and which He has given to me here. I know that not everyone who attends a YOUTH 2000 retreat has such a profound experience of God's call, but I do know that YOUTH 2000 is the tool that God used to "knock me over the head" with the calling He had for me.

Are you open to God's call in your life? Even if it comes in the least expected way or from the least expected person?

I encourage All of you single young women to at least visit our website (www.passionistnuns.org), give us a call (270) 233-4571, or even to come visit us 8564 Crisp Rd. Whitesville, KY. Also, you can email us at vocations@passionistnuns.org. If you think God might be calling you to religious life, I challenge you, do something about it!

"Can you hear Me now? Dare to put out into the deep!"

Theology of the Body, By Josh McCarty

The scene is set in a far away place, but not too different from here on earth. Ghosts have arrived on a bus and are wandering around, trying to figure out what to do. Many of the Ghosts, at this point in the story, have already been helped by angel-like creatures to find their way. Here we meet a man with a certain problem, though he was not convinced that it was major.

"I saw coming towards us a Ghost who carried something on his shoulder. Like all the Ghosts, he was unsubstantial. What sat on his shoulder was a little red lizard, and it was twitching its tail like a whip and whispering things in his ear. As we caught sight of him he turned his head to the reptile with a snarl of impatience. 'Shut up, I tell you' he said. It wagged its tail and continued to whisper to him. He ceased snarling, and presently began to smile.

'Off so soon?' said a voice.

The speaker was more or less human in shape but larger than a man, and so bright that I could hardly look at him. His presence smote on my eyes and on my body too.

'Yes. I'm off,' said the Ghost. 'Thanks for all your hospitality. But it's no good, you see. I told this little chap' (he indicated the lizard) 'that he'd have to be quiet if he came—which he insisted on doing. Of course his stuff won't do here: I realize that. But he won't stop. I shall just have to go home.'

'Would you like me to make him quiet?' said the flaming Spirit—an angel, as I now understood.

'Of course I would,' said the Ghost.

'Then I will kill him,' said the Angel, taking a step forward.

'Oh—ah—look out! You're burning me. Keep away,' said the Ghost, retreating.

'Do you want him killed?'

'You didn't say anything about killing him at first. I hardly meant

to bother you with anything so drastic as that.'

'It's the only way,' said the angel.

[After lots and lots of excuses from the Ghost] 'Damn and blast you! Go on, can't you? Get it over. Do what you like,' bellowed the Ghost: but ended whimpering, 'God help me. God help me.'"

- Taken from *The Great Divorce* by C. S. Lewis

You'll have to read on to find out the rest of the story. So what does this little story have to do with the Theology of the Body? I thought you would never ask. In this excerpt, C. S. Lewis uses the image of a lizard to represent lust, that is all our desires which are out of whack. John Paul the Great tells us in the Theology of the Body that Jesus' work of redemption includes changing our hearts from wanting all those crazy, uncontrolled things that we shouldn't want, intensely desiring what is good and beautiful.

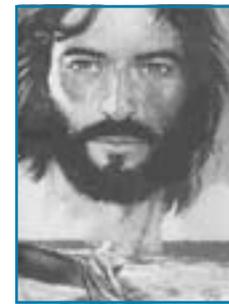
The Theology of the Body contains some life-changing information, stuff that might make the hair on the back of your neck stand up. During the first week of January, '06, I was blessed to spend a week studying the Theology of the Body under a man who has dedicated his life to teaching what John Paul the Great taught. I had such a blessed time and met a ton of holy, talented, and excited people. How great would it be to tell you everything that I learned that week? But since that would take another week, I will just share with you two things.

The first thing is that marriage is beautiful because it points us to heaven. But wait just a second, St. Paul writes that it is better not to get married. How is that good for marriage? And what about sex? Doesn't the Church think that sex is just a necessary evil for the making of babies? NO!! The Church is the biggest promoter of marriage and sex as God created them. She is so fond of conjugal relations, sex, for two reasons. The first reason is that God created sex and, in fact, commanded Adam and Eve to engage in it: "Go forth and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). Whatever God creates is good and sexual intercourse is no exception. This in mind, one can still abuse sex especially with selfish motives (this is the lust symbolized by the lizard in the story by C.S. Lewis). The second reason sex is so good is that sex, as God created it, is to be the total gift of husband to wife and wife to husband.

God's love is fruitful and the love between husband and wife is meant to image His love. In fact, the relation between the Father and the Son is so intense that it results in another person, the Holy Spirit. The sexual act is meant to image the Trinity, though this image is not perfect. That is why babies are not "accessories" to marriage but are at the heart of marital love. Husband and wife are designed to love as God loves. John Paul is really making some potent claims. Isn't it awesome?

Marriage points us to heaven which is the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. The Wedding Feast of the Lamb is when Christ marries the Church, that is, when Christ and the Church become "one flesh." Sound familiar? Remember back to Genesis: "Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gen 2:24). The marriage of man and woman is not the Marriage of the Lamb, because remember that in heaven men are not married nor given in marriage (Mt. 22:30). Even though we fail and marriages are often anything but an image of heaven, God planned marriage to tell us about heaven. Lived correctly, marriage shows us free, total, faithful, and fruitful love. The fulfillment and model for this love of man and woman is Christ's love for the Church. Christ loved the Church unto death, death on a cross. The fruit of this self gift is the birth of the sons and daughters of God. Marriage gives us a foretaste of heavenly love. Sure, it's a lot for God to ask of marriage, but it is within His plan and He will give the grace.

The second thing is that celibacy is beautiful because it is already like living in heaven. In heaven all of our lives will be freely, totally, faithfully, and fruitfully directed to Christ who has always loved this way. Celibacy is a way to begin to live out, here on earth, total dedication to Christ. Most people are called to marriage. So, the call to celibacy, in addition to the already humanly impossible call of marriage, is a radical invitation and challenge. Furthermore, true celibacy is to live as Christ lived, with undivided attention for the Church and for the Father. Christ loved us this much (stretch your arms out), to the point of dying on the cross. The celibate is called to this total gift of self. So, how is this like heaven? Take it from John Paul the Great: Earthly continence for the kingdom "is a sign that the body, whose end is not the grave, is directed to glorification. Already by this very fact... continence 'for the kingdom of heaven' is a witness among men that anticipates the future resurrection" (Theology of the Body 267). Since heaven is total commitment to Christ, the celibate person (not just



Josh McCarty is seated at rear center with a group of pilgrims including Fr. Andy Garner, left, in an auto parts store in Morehead, Ky., waiting for a bus to be repaired so the group could go on to Washington, D.C. for the Jan. 22 March for Life. Larena Lawson Photo

Continued on page 9

Body Language

A commentary on the intersection of faith, sex, and culture with Christopher West

Pope Benedict's Heavenly Vision of Erotic Love

By Christopher West

What are housewives really “desperate” for? And why can't Mick Jagger get no satisfaction? Allow me to suggest an unlikely place to find some answers: Pope Benedict XVI's new encyclical “God is Love.”

Our world is saturated with sex but starved for love. We're so impoverished that we're often willing to eat out of a dumpster to satisfy our hunger. Without wagging a finger at anyone, Benedict's thoughtful meditations on erotic and divine love (eros and agape in Greek) set our sights on a banquet that's almost too good to believe.

The pope observes that Christianity is often criticized for being opposed to the body and sex. While he admits that such tendencies have always existed, Benedict insists that negativity toward the body and sex is, in all truth, foreign to authentic Christian belief and practice.

Christianity does not “blow the whistle” on erotic love. It seeks to rescue it from degradation, to “heal it and restore its true grandeur,” he says.

In order to restore erotic love's true grandeur, he argues that we must experience the purification of eros (human, erotic love) by agape (divine, sacrificial love). As this happens, eros is able “to provide not just fleeting pleasure, but a certain foretaste of the pinnacle of our existence, of that beatitude for which our whole being yearns.”

This is quite a proposition from a Roman pontiff. Sexual love in God's plan is meant to provide a foretaste of the eternal bliss that awaits us in heaven? Maybe this is why we're all so interested in sex. Maybe we're actually looking for God. Benedict seems to affirm this when he writes that true erotic love offers a path “towards authentic self-discovery and indeed the discovery of God.”

This is not exactly what the average person learns in Catholic schools. All I basically heard growing up was, “Don't do it.” Both MTV and my hormones debuted in the early 1980s, and both were screaming, “Just do it.” Gee, which message was more attractive to me?

So, without any knowledge of the heavenly banquet, I sought to satisfy my hunger by dumpster diving. I quickly tossed off the shackles of my oppressive “Catholic upbringing” (I've learned since that it was not an authentic Catholic upbringing) and indulged my libido without restraint.

In doing so, I learned the hard way, that “an intoxicated and undisciplined eros,” as Benedict observes, “is not an ascent in ‘ecstasy’ towards the Divine, but a fall, a degradation of man” — just like eating out of a dumpster.

I was taken by the culture's apparent celebration of the human body and of sex. But I came to see, as Benedict writes, that the “contemporary way of exalting the body is deceptive. Eros, reduced to pure ‘sex,’ has become a commodity, a mere ‘thing’ to be bought and sold, or rather man himself becomes a commodity. This is hardly man's great ‘yes’ to the body.”

Perhaps God gave us sexual desire to be like the fuel of a rocket that is meant to launch us towards eternal bliss with him. What would happen if those rocket engines became inverted, no longer pointing us towards that stars but only back upon ourselves? Set that rocket off and the only possible result is a massive blast of self-destruction.

Maybe the Catholic Church's vision of sex is not the prudish list of prohibitions it's so often assumed to be. Maybe it's all meant to redirect our engines toward the stars, toward a love that never fades or fails. Isn't this the love that housewives are desperate for?



Theology of the Body, Taken from The Great Divorce by C. S. Lewis

By Josh McCarty (Continued from page 8)

priests) begins to live this out, even though it still involves the cross.

Celibacy is an awesome gift. It is a gift to God to fully commit oneself to Him. And it is a gift of others both for their service and to remind them that marriage and sexual intercourse are only a foretaste of heaven. When do people get divorced? When they discover that their spouse wasn't their ultimate source of happiness and they were expecting it. Lets face it, there are no perfect spouses, except one. The celibate person says by his or her life “you can't find happiness in your earthly spouse. Final happiness exists in God alone.” Keep in mind that celibacy is not just for others. Celibacy is also for the personal holiness of the person. In this unique gift of celibacy, God draws the individual ever closer to himself. All in all, everyone benefits from this state in life.

Marriage, celibacy—what are you called to? I don't know, but God does. Already married or a professed celibate—how is God calling you deeper into communion with Him and the ones to whom you are committed? I don't know, but God does. So we start speaking about the Theology of the Body, and it leads us to speaking about vocations. It's a bit of a scary challenge to probe the mind of God. But whatever He calls us to is going to be splendid. Is he calling you to examine your marriage and receive His healing so that you can love your spouse more faithfully? Maybe you are clueless where God is calling you because you're young, divorced, or your spouse has died. God still has a plan for you. Fear not. Pray to him and ask for answers on how He wants you to love.

The body is made for love, that's why God made us male and female. He loved us first and stamped into our bodies that we are made for love. After we rejected His love in the garden, He loved us again and sent a Savior to redeem all of us our bodies, our person, our desires, our thoughts, and our relationships. Christ has come to kill all the sin in us, to kill all the lizards on our shoulders. We must let Him transform us for He won't advance without our permission. That is the Theology of the Body. To refer to the words of the Christian singer songwriter Stephen Chapman (from Paducah): “Everything else comes down to this / Nothing any higher on the list than love / It's all about love” (From the song “All About Love”).

To find more information on the Theology of the Body, look online at www.theologyofthebody.net

Supreme Court Reaffirms a Parent's Right to Know

Wednesday, January 18, 2006, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously remanded *Ayotte v. Planned Parenthood*, the case dealing with New Hampshire's parental notification law, to the First Circuit Court of Appeals.

“Today's decision reaffirms that parents have a right to know and that girls have a right to have their parents involved—it is a victory for both parents and minor girls,” stated Mary Spaulding Balch, State Legislative director. “There is no abortion procedure that can be performed so quickly that there is not enough time to make a short phone call to a minor girl's parents.”

“It is outrageous for pro-abortion activists to try to prevent parents from even knowing that an abortion is being performed on their minor daughter,” said Balch. “It is during times like these that girls need their parents most.”

This law does not preclude a doctor from treating any life-threatening medical emergencies. In other situations, a parent of the minor girl would have to be notified or a judicial by-pass obtained before an abortion is performed.

Parental involvement is a reasonable requirement supported by 69% of Americans according to a November 2005 Gallup poll. Currently, 28 states have parental involvement laws in effect.

For more information on parental involvement laws, visit www.nrlc.org. National Right to Life is the nation's largest pro-life organization, with 50 state affiliates and approximately 3,000 local affiliates nationwide. NRLC works through legislation and education to protect those threatened by abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and assisted suicide.



January 25, 2006 Prayer Service for Christian Unity. From left, the pastor of First Christian Church in Owensboro, Rev. Phil Curran who gave the sermon, Bishop John McRaith, Fr. John Vaughan, and the pastor of Settle Memorial Methodist, Rev. Todd Love. Lois Rutigliano photo

St. Stephen Cathedral Interfaith Prayer Service

Lois Rutigliano

OWENSBORO, Ky. - Phillip Curran, Pastor at First Christian Church, preached the sermon for the Inter Faith Prayer Service for the 2006 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at St. Stephen Cathedral on Wednesday, January 25, 2006. In his sermon, Rev. Curran said, "Where Two or Three are gathered in Jesus' name, He is there. Here we are: Protestant and Catholic, dreamers, visionaries, cynics, and skeptics ... All in this place. In this place tonight, some of us are wounded, some are well healed; some are broken, others are feeling fragile. The body of Christ, we are; surrounded by God's holy presence; surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. Surely, this is what God had in mind when the Spirit's wind blew among that group of people on Pentecost as we assemble here tonight."

In his conclusion, Rev. Curran told a story about a parish priest who was the pastor of a divided parish. He invited those on both sides of a controversial matter to have dinner in the parish hall. Neither group knew that those on the other side would be present, and the most vocal in both camps said to their allies, "I wouldn't have agreed to come if I knew they were going to be here!" And for the longest time, all felt the tensions in the air. But with great ease the parish priest invited everyone to have a seat at the long banquet tables that ran down the center of the room. "They" were on one side, "them" were on the other, and both sides had to look at each other lest they spend the entire evening gazing at the table. And as it turned out, the two sides began talking to each other. And, by the end of the night, leaders from both camps told Fr. Caruso what a stroke of genius it was to have everyone gathered in one room.

Bill, who had been one of the greatest skeptics when he first arrived, said to his priest as he was leaving, "Father, I have to be honest... I never thought I'd be comfortable around 'them.' Tonight was an education. But I have discovered that they are okay. Do you think we can do it again?" "I hope so," said the Pastor. And then he asked, "George, do you think it will ever happen?" "What do you mean?" "Do you think there will ever come a time when the word 'they,' will become 'us'?"

Jonathan Carroll, Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, led the Litany of the presence



Kathy Dunlany posed with Bishop John McRaith in front of a SPIRITUAL Adoption display board in the foyer of St. Stephen Cathedral after the Jan. 23, 2006 Mass for Life. Lois Rutigliano photo

Gospel of Life Committee Offers Spiritual Adoption Program To Parishes and Schools

By Kathy Dunlany

In January, Bishop McRaith reminded everyone that bringing an end to abortion is a spiritual battle that will only be won by prayer and fasting. He asked us to consider saying a short prayer each day for an unborn baby in danger of abortion and his/her Mom. In conjunction with our Bishop's suggestion, the diocesan Gospel of Life Committee has offered all parishes and schools in the diocese access to the Spiritual Adoption Program. The diocese provides a parish, school or other group with a set of beautiful posters chronicling the baby's growth, and prayer cards for all participants to use.

During this past year, St. Stephen Cathedral, Sts. Joseph & Paul, Our Lady of Lourdes in Owensboro, St John the Baptist Parish in Fordsville, and St. William Parish in Marion have participated. Most concluded their program with a baby shower with gifts to Birthright.

If your parish would like to participate, March 25th (the feast of the Annunciation) is a good time to start, ending at Christmas. School groups, classrooms, or clubs usually like to begin in September and end in May. If you are interested, contact Dick Murphy at the Pastoral Center (1-270-683-1545) for information and materials.

of Christ and Todd Love; Pastor of Settle Memorial Methodist Church read the prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercessions.

The Choir from First Christian Church provided the Prelude music under the direction of Connie Ford with Angela Bruce accompanying.

The love offering taken up will go to aid the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Fr. John Vaughan, Pastor of the Cathedral, received the offering while the First Christian Church Choir sang, "There's a Spirit Here." Bishop John J. McRaith led the congregation in the Lord's Prayer at the conclusion of the service, which was followed by a reception in the Undercroft of the Cathedral to continue the fellowship already begun at the Prayer service.

Parishes Bid Farewell To Father Tom Buckman

The Western Kentucky Catholic, March, 2006 11

Submitted by Judy Willett; Photos by Ruthie Elder

BARDWELL, KY. - A large number of parishioners gathered for a sending off of Father Tom to his new parish families of St. Anthony, Axtel, and St. Mary, McQuady, Parishes. We dedicated a plaque in his honor and scrapbooks were given to him filled with photos and mementos. We have appreciated Father Tom's insightful suggestions with all our renovations projects these last four years.

Father Tom Buckman will carry to his new parish families in Breckinridge county a wealth of experience after working with a dedicated and often stubborn people here at St. Charles parish. We are sure he has smiled many times when what he wanted to do was shake his head in consternation and then say "Lord please help with these your people!" While working and praying with Fr. Tom, we have been inspired by his thought-provoking sermons, his love and attention to the Eucharist and his devotion to Jesus and Mary, His



Father Tom Buckman poses beside the plaque in his honor at St. Charles. At right, he accepted scrapbooks filled with pictures and mementos from the St. Charles parishioners.

mother. Father Tom has left us with a legacy of prayer, reminding us all of the power of prayer in our daily lives. There are lots of times when we THINK we are in control, We THINK we know the answer to a problem; we KNOW we are RIGHT. It is sometimes a long journey back around to God to discover we must pray and surrender our lives to God, just as Father Tom gives his life to follow the Lord, by ministering to God's people.



Father Tom has shown a reflective heart and helped us find the tried and true ways of expressing our gratitude to God by reception of the sacraments. Parishioners at St. Charles KNOW Father Tom has served us well. We KNOW the measure of a man is not height and stature, but

what's in his heart and Father Tom has a strong and prayerful heart. We have been most honored that The Lord lent him as a priest among us for a little while.

Thank you, Father Tom, for sharing your priestly ministry with us.

St. Ambrose Faith Community Keeps The Good News Going Around

St. Ambrose Catholic Church, in Henshaw, Ky., held their annual Joe Carroll Moore Burgoo January 21. Joe Carroll and his lifelong friend Joe Bingham, members of St. Ambrose parish, were killed tragically in a drowning accident in 1997. Joe Carroll had begun the annual burgoo cooks before his death. Joe's family and parishioners carry on his legacy, continuing with the annual burgoo, an event eagerly anticipated by the community. Pictured are Joe Carroll's children cooking at the 2006 burgoo, Randy and Scott Moore and Carol Martin. Submitted by Stephanie Dossett.



Aaron Mackey (shown in photo) and his twin brother Micah are among the twenty students who meet at St. Ambrose Parish Hall each Wednesday evening for children's religious education classes. Submitted by Stephanie Dossett.

OWENSORO, Ky. - The faith community of Precious Blood came together on January 8, 2006, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood of their pastor, Father Brad Whistle. It was a beautiful day from beginning to end. The Lord gifted us with a sunny day, much unlike the day of January 10, 1981. No matter what the weather was like, there was enough warmth to warm up the place.

The planning for the special event began in October by the Parish Council and other members of the parish.

His family and friends came from Whitesville and the surrounding areas to celebrate with their son, brother, brother-in-law, uncle, great uncle and friend. In the 25 years the family has grown very much and the love they showered upon him was as great as the day of his ordination. The only difference was there were more this day to shower their love upon him.

The Mass was truly a celebration of the priesthood and this special gift to the church. The music filled the newly renovated church and one would think there were angels among us. Father Ed Bradley gave the homily and he emphasized three great qualities Fr. Brad has that makes him the priest he is today. He spoke of Fr. Brad being filled with the spirit of joy, the ability to enable others and a man of prayer.

A reception followed in the Parish Hall and a gift of a 4-wheeler was presented to him. He was greatly surprised and appreciative.

THANK YOU FATHER BRAD AND CONGRATULATIONS!!!



Father Brad tried out the new ATV given him by the people of the parish.



Bishop John with Father Brad. Photos by Mike Thompson

Ministering To The Good Guys

Would you like to thank a priest who has made a difference in your life?

This is the place! www.thankyouofather.com/

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Now it's time we minister to them -- the "Good Guys."

PRIESTHOOD

a most precious gift
The priest ... is something transcendent: through baptism he brings souls to birth, through the sacrament of penance he purifies them, through communion he gives them our Lord's body as He himself did at the Last Supper, and at their deaths he helps them appear before the Beloved by giving them ... their final forgiveness and their supreme strength ... Every single day of his life, he does what Jesus did during his three years of ministry – he teaches people to know, love and serve their Master. What a vocation!

– Charles de Foucauld, from a letter to a young friend preparing for ordination, 1897

Fr. Andy Garner celebrated Mass on Jan. 21, 2006, on a bus somewhere in West Virginia with pilgrims en route to the March for Life in Washington, D.C. Photo by Josh McCarty



Students' trip to March for Life Full of Surprises *(Continued from page 1)*

The Western Kentucky Catholic, March, 2006 13



Owensboro Diocesan seminarian Steve Hohman carrying a sign defending the legal rights of the unborn in Washington, D.C. Larena Lawson Photo

love babies. Yes, we do. We love babies. How about you!" and "Hey, hey ... ho, ho ... Roe v. Wade has got to go." It was a peaceful walk with most of our consciousness filled with trying to stay with the group and "where is Steve?" Many of the group met people they knew from other places around the country. Some were very glad to see Br. Maximilian from the CFRs (a religious community which helps out with Youth 2000). We were also able to see some of the grand buildings of Washington as we marched.

Soon after we finished the march, arriving at the U.S. Supreme Court Building, we departed for the bus. The walk back to the bus seemed to be the longest walk of the day. We were all happy to get back to the bus, all on one piece. We even found Steve. Our mission was accomplished. We had waged another peaceful battle for the protection of the unborn.

It is an exciting time to be in the pro-life movement. So many positive things are happening. Many bills are being brought up and passed in state legislatures across the nation to limit abortions and protect the unborn. Pro-life Supreme Court justices are being installed in Washington who will one day pass judgments to outlaw abortion. Pro-life senators, congressmen, governors, and representatives are being elected in unprecedented numbers. We ourselves go to a seminary (Saint Meinrad) that is filled with future priests who are truly dedicated to the rights of the unborn, and actively doing something about it. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

We can see ahead of us, and we can see that it will not be long before our nation truly does pass laws to outlaw abortion. You yourself can be part of this historical change. Things are happening throughout the nation and right here in our diocese.

Find out what you can do; contact the Right-to-Life office by calling Owensboro

marching, singing, chanting and praying together. There were church groups from every state in the eastern U.S., and from numerous different faiths. There were school groups of young kids, each group marked out by their distinctly colored hat, hoodie, or scarf. There were groups of college kids, most carrying large signs marking out where they were from. There were individual families, and mothers pushing baby strollers. Despite news reports to the contrary, the entire day we saw exactly TWO people there with pro-abortion signs. Needless to say, they were the ones who made the newspapers.

The mood was prayerful and joyous. People were excited to be there, and it was a scene of 100,000 people joined together in harmony for a cause: the right of all people to be given the gift of life. At the pro-life mass the night before the march, Cardinal Keeler of Baltimore pointed out that it is the young people who are voting pro-life, who are taking value in the rights of the unborn, who will move our nation to change its laws. The march saw a beautiful mixture of both young and old people. But overwhelmingly, the crowd was made up of young people.

As our group walked down Constitution Avenue, we had a grand time. Since the march was shorter this year, due to construction, it wasn't a very long hike. On the walk, we chanted things like, "We

Corley is hooked on OCHS and its students

By Mary Hilda McFarland

"Once you start teaching here you get hooked on the students, the academics, and the athletics which make OCHS such a special place to be a part of," Neil Corley responded when asked what kept him teaching at Catholic High. The 12-year veteran teacher continued that the qualities that kept him in the school are the "dedication of students and parents to achieve a quality education and a good moral upbringing."

Mr. Corley graduated from Catholic High in 1987 and later from Western Kentucky University with a Bachelor's Degree in Science. Since then he has earned his Masters in Secondary Education with a minor in Biology. Those degrees have come in handy in the classroom as he presently teaches Anatomy and Physiology and Introduction to Physics and Chemistry (IPC). He has also taught Biology. He especially likes teaching Freshmen because "you can see them change more in one year than another level in high school. They become comfortable with the classroom setting and the school as a whole and they are eager to learn." When Mr. Corley was preparing for the teaching profession he did his student teaching at Daviess County High School, and he has spent one year on the staff of Hancock County High, so he has some experience with other schools and their students, academics, and athletics.

His wife, Kim, and his daughters, Kristen and Hadley, are special blessings in this teacher's life. He credits them with teaching him the importance of family.

Extra-curricular activities play a big part in this teacher's life too. And they were a big part of his student days here when he was a four-year veteran of the baseball team. Over the years he has been assistant football coach, under Mojo Hollowell, Head Coach for two years for the Girls' Soccer Team, Head Coach for 5 years for the Baseball team and for 3 years for the Boys' Golf Team. At this time he is the Intramural Basketball Coordinator, having handled that extracurricular position for six years. He is also a member of the Discipline Review Board.

Of Catholic High, Coach Corley says, "The support and kindness of the faculty and staff here is matched by no other school I have been a part of."

Corley concluded, "I would say that this school is an excellent place to teach because of the support you get from administration, fellow teachers, parents, and students that simply makes the job of teaching much easier. The school as a whole is a family who cares for each other and will go to no limit to help one another in whatever goal they wish to attain."



Neil Corley

Right-to-Life at 270-685-4922, or by checking out these websites - www.rtlo.org, www.krla.org, www.nrlc.org

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 6: Hours we spent in a parking lot in Morehead while the bus was stalled out
- 5: Men from Whitesville who were found underneath the broken down bus, in a parking lot, changing the fuel filter
- 40: years that the Hebrews wandered in the desert
- 29: hours it took us to get to Washington on the bus
- 3: Hours that we played 20 questions on the last leg of the trip to DC
- 29: Waist sizes of the soldiers guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, one of the stops on our trip
- 33: Years that the Right-to-Life march has taken place
- 52: students and adults on the bus
- 444: Deacons and priests that we counted concelebrating the mass at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception the night before the March

Mass Honors Religious Celebrating Jubilees

The Council of Religious Cordially
Invites Everyone To Celebrate
the Jubilees Of
Religious Sisters, Brothers,
Priests
on April 23, 2006 at 2:30 pm
at Cathedral of St. Stephen,
Bishop John McRaith, presiding.
Reception to follow in the undercroft

*"I thank my God whenever I think
of you; and every time I pray for you,
I pray with joy ..."* Philippians 1:3

Bishop John McRaith: "Join us
on at St. Stephen Cathedral to
honor and give thanks to the priests
and Religious who have given their
lives to His service to serve all of
the people of the Diocese."

80 YEARS

Ursuline Sisters - Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. Mary Bertha Wethington, OSU

75 YEARS

Sisters of Charity - Nazareth, Ky.

Sr. Helen Gertrude Fontaine, SCN

Sr. Mary Fedler, SCN

Sr. Leonora Brunner, SCN

Sr. James Maria Spillane, SCN

Ursuline Sisters - Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. Blanche Rita Bickett, OSU

Sr. Mary Beatrice Donahue, OSU

70 YEARS

Sisters of Charity - Nazareth, Ky.

Sr. Rita Englert, SCN

Sr. Marie Hill, SCN

Ursuline Sisters - Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. Walter Louise Lush, OSU

Sr. Cordelia Spalding, OSU

65 YEARS

Sisters of Charity - Nazareth, Ky.

Sr. Helen McNulty, SCN

Sr. James Albert Wiggins, SCN

Sr. Julia Clare Fontaine, SCN

Sr. Frances Barber, SCN

Sr. Marita Riede, SCN

Sr. Celeste Reedy, SCN

60 YEARS

Ursuline Sisters - Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. Mary Irene Cecil, OSU

Sr. Marita Greenwell, OSU

Sr. Rita Klarer, OSU

50 YEARS

Sisters of Charity - Nazareth, Ky.

Sr. Carol Clasgens, SCN

Sr. Mary Foeckler, SCN

Sr. Mary James Corey, SCN

Sr. Elizabeth Boone, SCN

Sr. Marguerite (Peggy)Fowkes, SCN

Ursuline Sisters - Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. George Mary Hagan, OSU

Sr. Ruth Mattingly, OSU

40 YEARS

Ursuline Sisters- Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. Rita Scott, OSU

Sisters of Charity - Nazareth, Ky.

Sr. Marie Becker, SCN

Passionist Nuns - Whitesville, Ky.

Sr. Mary Magdalen Wurth, C.P.

25 YEARS

Ursuline Sisters - Maple Mount, Ky.

Sr. Marilyn Mueth, OSU

Passionist Nuns - Whitesville, Ky.

Sr. Mary Agnes Higgs, C.P.

RELIGIOUS PRIESTS & BROTHERS

60 Years

Congregation of the Fathers of Mercy

- Auburn, Ky.

Father Daniel Sheehan, CPM

Father John Malloy, CPM

50 Years

Order of St. Benedict - St. Meinrad, In.

Father Timothy Sweeney, OSB

40 Years

Glenmary Home Missioners -

Cincinnati, Oh.

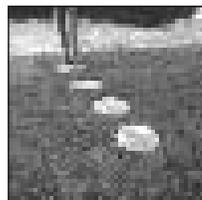
Brother Dennis Craig

25 years

Diocesan Priests

Father. Brad Whistle, Father. Tony Ste-
venson, Father. Pete Hughes.

Pray with us as we plan the Memorial Rosary Walk



Will you pray with us?

Our mission at Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Re-
treat Center is to help people get closer to God.

We want to build a new **Memorial Rosary Walk**.

You can help fulfill this mission by purchasing a
personalized brick for \$125.00.

Beads, mysteries, and the bricks encircling the cross
can also be sponsored. Please consider contributing to
the construction of this unique place of prayer.



Yes, I/We want to support the mission of the Center and the effect the retreat ministry has on the
lives of those who attend by contributing to the Memorial Rosary Walk. I/We want to support this
ministry by contributing:

- \$10,000 to sponsor the Shrine
- \$ 5,000 to sponsor Stone Bench
- \$ 2,500 to sponsor Wooden Bench
- \$ 1,000 to sponsor a Mystery
- \$ 500 to sponsor a Bead
- \$ 125 to sponsor a Brick
- \$ _____ Other

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please make checks payable to: Mount Saint Joseph Center
c/o Rosary Walk, 8001 Cummings Rd., Maple Mount, KY 42356-9999

If donating \$125 or more, please fill in the blocks with the name of the person or
persons to be inscribed on the brick, stone or bench. One letter, comma, period or
space must go in each box (15 maximum per line up to 3 lines):

Credit Card: Visa Mastercard
Card # _____
Expiration Date _____

Please complete and mail in this ad to
help build the Memorial Rosary Walk. For
further information about the Rosary Walk
or sponsorship opportunities, please contact
Sister Amelia Stenger, OSU, at
(270) 229-0200
or e-mail astenger@maplemount.org



Mount Saint Joseph
Conference and Retreat Center

The annual Catholic Schools Week Spelling Bee for the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Owensboro was held on January 30, 2006 at St. Joseph School in Bowling Green. The winner of the lower division for students in the fourth through sixth grades was 5th grader Will Tucker from Holy Name School. The runner-up in that division was 4th grader Hunter Brumley from Mary Carrico Memorial School. The winner in the upper division for students in seventh and eighth grades was 8th grader Corinne Casino from Holy Name School and the runner-up was 8th grader Thomas Choate from St. Joseph School in Bowling Green.

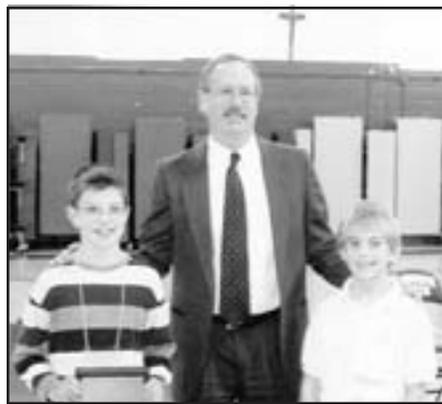
The other participants in the spelling bee representing their schools were Wilson Hutchison from St. Joseph in Bowling Green; Kendall Jarboe and Amber Phillips from St. Romuald School; Jerome Soldo and Josh Villafranca from Sts. Peter & Paul School; Rene Howard from Mary Carrico Memorial School; Mason Howard and Zarnina Mufti from Christ the King School; Carson Weber from St. Joseph School, Mayfield; Audrey Wheatley and Allyssa Vittitov from St. Ann Interparochial School; Logan Jones from Owensboro Catholic Elementary 4-6 Campus; Chase Tucker from St. John Elementary; Emily Hannan from St. Mary Elementary; Katherine Hagan and Mercedes Varble from St. Mary of the Woods; J.T. Wells from Owensboro Catholic Middle School; and Paul Deneve and Ellen Ebelhar from St. Mary Middle School.



Above, St. Joseph School in Bowling Green was honored to have Bishop John McRaith join the faculty, staff and students to celebrate an All-School Mass and bless and dedicate the new Milton Family Technology Center. Mr. John Milton, an alum of St. Joseph (Class of 1938), generously funded the renovation of the school Library as well as the new computer lab which now houses 24 state of the art computers and learning software. Mr. Milton of Arlington, Virginia, and local members of his family were in attendance for the day's festivities. Kevin Kauffeld Photo



In picture at left, from left to right: Eighth grader, Corinne Casino from Holy Name School, Winner of the 7th-8th grade division of the Catholic Schools Week Spelling Bee, Jim Mattingly, and Eighth grader Thomas Choate, St. Joseph Bowling Green, Runner-Up.



From left to right: Fifth grader, Will Tucker from Holy Name School, Winner of the 4th-6th grade division of the Catholic Schools Week Spelling Bee, Jim Mattingly, and Fourth grader Hunter Brumley from Mary Carrico Memorial School.

Bishop McRaith To Address GRADD Workshop, "Faith And Aging Reaching Our Community"

OWENSBORO, KY --- The Green River Area Development District's Area Agency on Aging is hosting a Faith and Aging Conference. The event will be held at the Walnut Memorial Baptist Church on Tuesday, March 21 from 9:30--- 2:30 p.m. The cost is \$10, which covers a continental breakfast and lunch. Pre-registration is required and the deadline is Wednesday, March 15. A registration form may be

obtained by calling Monie Sosh at the GRADD office at 270-926-4433.

The event is an ecumenical gathering to focus on current issues related to aging and caregiving.

This year's keynote speaker is the Most Reverend John J. McRaith, Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro.

Other topics include a forum on home-bound ministries and Christian bookstores.

In the afternoon, Phyllis McElwaine, RN will discuss how faith can help a person get through difficult times in their life's journey. The conference is especially intended for pastors, senior adult leaders, caregivers, community professionals and church staff. The day will provide participants with new ideas and a better understanding of the needs of the aging population.

Return To The Upper Room - A Retreat On The Gifts Of The Holy Spirit

St. Joseph Passionist Monastery May 19-21, 2006 Retreat Master: Fr. Ray Clark

Retreat begins with supper on Friday evening, ends Sunday morning at 10:00; Friday, May 19: Arrival Time: 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Cost: Room, Meals and Conferences - \$150.00

Please contact: Sr. Joseph Marie C.P., 8564 Crisp Rd., Whitesville, Ky 42378

(270)-233-4571 (leave message and Sister will return your call)

email address: s-josephm@passionistnuns.org; www.passionistnuns.org

Holy Name School Extends Students' Learning Through Variety of Activities



B. R. Payne and his wife Sarah Payne came to visit Mrs. Pattye Tweddell's first grade class at Holy Name School in January. B. R. has been sick and Mrs. Tweddell's class has been praying for him and they made him cards hoping it would make him feel better. Pictured is Mrs. Tweddell reading a thank you card from Mr. Payne and Mr. Payne is passing out doughnuts to the class. Mr. and Mrs. Payne both expressed how happy they were for the prayers and cards. HNE Photo



Holy Name School's 8th Grade Girls came in third place at the Diocesan Basketball Tournament held in Bowling Green at St. Joseph School. Pictured are the girl's presenting the their trophy to Mrs. Caton, Holy Name's Athletic Director. Girl's on the team are: Emma Bridges, Hannah Carroll, Laurel Humbert, Rachel Scott, Sara Garrett, Ally Geer, Whitney Woodard, Lauren Evince, Whitney Warren, and Kristen Swaidner. HNE Photo



Holy Name School held a retreat day on January 19, 2006 to help prepare the students for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Pictured is second grade teacher, Mrs. Sandy Fleming helping Jacob O'Nan on an activity about sheep. The children enjoyed the day of prayer, activity, and fun as they prepared themselves for the gift of Penance. HNE Photo



Congratulations to the Holy Name Cardinals for winning the 8th Grade Boys Diocesan Basketball Tournament held in Bowling Green at St. Joseph School. Pictured is the team presenting the trophy to Mrs. Caton, Holy Name's Athletic Director. The team members are: John Sherman, Maxx Hagan, Dylan Peters, Tyler Delano, Aaron Kendall, Joe Payne, Clay Willis, Logan Higginson, Matthew Hudson, Alex Spiller, and Travis Baird. HNE Photo

Pope tells magazine staff church must participate in cultural debates

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Catholic Church must participate in modern cultural debates, finding ways to present enduring truths in a serious, yet accessible way, Pope Benedict XVI said. The pope met Feb. 17 with the editors and staff of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, a Jesuit-run magazine founded by Pope Pius IX in 1850 and one that continues to be reviewed by the Vatican Secretariat of State before publication. By writing about cultural, social and political issues, the pope said, the magazine helps the Catholic Church in its dialogue with the modern world, identifying positive trends and offering the guidance of the Gospel. Increasingly, modern culture is "closed to God and to his moral law, even if it is not always prejudicially adverse to Christianity," the pope said.

Br. Fidelis von Hazmburg professes first monastic vows

Novice Joseph von Hazmburg, OSB, professed temporary vows as a Benedictine monk on February 2, 2006, at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, IN. He had completed his novitiate, a year of prayer and study of the Benedictine way of life. It is customary that the newly professed be assigned a religious name. Nov. Joseph will now be known as Br. Fidelis Mary.

Br. Fidelis, 39, is a native of Albuquerque, NM. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice from the University of Nevada and a BA in philosophy from the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology. He entered the monastery on February 1, 2005.

The three-year period of temporary vows provides a continuing opportunity for the monk and the monastic community to determine whether monastic life is, indeed, the right vocation for this individual.



Br. Fidelis

Pope says marriage tribunals must act quickly, follow church law

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- For the good of individuals and the Catholic Church as a whole, marriage tribunals must act as quickly as possible while fully following church law, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"For more than a few of the faithful," he said, "ecclesiastical sentences in this area, in fact, have an impact on the possibility or not of receiving Communion." Pope Benedict met Jan. 28 with members of the Roman Rota, a church court dealing mainly with marriage cases. A tribunal declaration that a marriage was invalid would allow a divorced and civilly remarried couple to have their union recognized by the church and, therefore, to receive Communion.

Pope Benedict said the reason why so many bishops at the October synod on the Eucharist raised questions about tribunals and annulment procedures was precisely because receiving the Eucharist is so important. At times, the pope said, it can appear that pastoral concern for people in irregular marriage situations clashes head-on with the church's insistence that matrimony is forever and that annulments may be granted only when there is clear proof that the conditions for a valid marriage did not exist from the beginning.

"The fundamental point of encounter between law and pastoral concern," the pope said, is "love for the truth." The pastoral value of an annulment "cannot be separated from love for the truth," he said. The purpose of an annulment procedure "is not to uselessly complicate the lives of the faithful nor even less to exacerbate litigiousness, but only to serve the truth," Pope Benedict said. The pope also said a husband and wife who have separated cannot self-declare their marriage invalid because marriage is a sacrament of the church and a good for society. Reason dictates that an impartial third party be asked to examine the facts and make a judgment, he said.

At the same time, the search for truth in a marriage case is very concrete and has a deep impact on the individuals involved, the pope said. Because it touches both their human and Christian development, "it is very important that the declaration arrive in a reasonable amount of time," the pope said.

Pope Benedict said it also was very important that the church's pastoral approach to couples be evident long before any troubles arise. From the moment a couple requests to be married in a Catholic Church, priests must work to ensure that the couple understands the meaning of the sacrament of matrimony, he said. And at the first sign of trouble between a husband and wife, he said, they must be offered assistance in resolving their differences and finding "the path of reconciliation."

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Pilgrimage to Rome, Florence, Siena, Assisi



Join Fr. Richard Powers for a Pilgrimage to ROME, FLORENCE, SIENA, ASSISI...10 days MAY 17-26 from Louisville, KY. Cost: \$2,599.00 - For registration and information please call Fr. Richard Powers at 771-0729 at St. Mary Magdalene - Sorgho, KY.

Marriage no romantic picnic, but worth the effort, therapist says

PITTSBURGH (CNS) -- "Our culture has really done a magnificent job of convincing people that good marriages 'just happen,'" according to marriage and family therapist Larry Badaczewski. Many experts caution against this romantic, magical view of marriage, "but somehow we have got it in our heads that it shouldn't be that hard," he said. "It's almost as if we refuse to see how complex we are as individuals, and that when you take two imperfect people and have them live together, you still somehow expect them to have a perfect life." But the reality is much more complicated, said Badaczewski, who has worked with Pittsburgh area parishes for 21 years. He is on staff at St. John Neumann in Franklin Park and an auxiliary staff member at St. Sebastian in Ross Township. Married couples fight over issues that "will be with us till the end of time" -- money, sex, parenting, social life, extended family relationships, division of labor in the household, and how they practice the faith, he told the Pittsburgh Catholic, the diocesan newspaper.

Clergy Survivors of Clergy Sexual Abuse

The clergy self-help group, Jordan's Crossing, in collaboration with Male Survivor Week-ends of Recovery and Kirkridge Retreat Center, will offer healing to the men and women of God who are themselves wounded healers May 26-28, 2006 Kirkridge Retreat Center, Bangor, PA

This week-end of recovery is being offered for clergy of all faiths who are survivors of sexual abuse by clergy. Survivor clergy are defined as present or former priests, ministers, monks, nuns, or their equivalent from any other religious expression. Confidentiality and emotional safety will be central to the success of this week-end of recovery. Personal healing and continued support and connection with Jordan's Crossing are anticipated outcomes.

This experience provides a way to find words, understanding, and a sense of community as you continue your experience of psychotherapy or begin the process of recovery. The weekend, facilitated by a team of experienced psychotherapists who specialize with survivors, will provide experiences that complement other recovery work.

For further information, visit the Male Survivor website: www.malesurvivor.org or contact Dale English MS (570-242-6600), or Mikele Rauch LMFT (617-244-4524), or Male Survivor (800-738-4181).

Register online at www.kirkridge.org or by phone at 610-588-1793

Marchers Make A Powerful Display of Faith, Hope, and Love For the Sanctity of Life

By Larena Lawson

WHITESVILLE, Ky. - Four years ago, the St. Mary of the Woods Youth Group here began what has unfortunately become an annual pilgrimage to Washington D.C. to participate in the March for Life Walk up Constitution Avenue to protest the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the United States. This year, they sent the largest delegation to date, a group of 52 high school students and adults representing five Western Kentucky parishes, St. Mary of the Woods, St. William, St. Lawrence, St. Martin, and Blessed Mother. They were accompanied by Diocesan Vocation Director, Father Andy Garner as spiritual director, and by two seminarians studying for the Diocese of Owensboro, Josh McCarty and Steve Hohman. In preparation for this journey of faith, this group gathered together several times prior to the trip to learn more about what this pilgrimage was all about and the reason for making it.

On Sunday, January 8, a special gathering was organized to pray for the unborn who are threatened with the cruelty of abortion, for those who have already been aborted, for their parents and their families. A solemn procession was made from St. Mary's Church to St. Mary's Cemetery, approximately 3 miles. The day was unseasonably warm for January, cloudy, with strong, gusty winds. As they processed to the cemetery following the crucifix of Jesus, they prayed Mary's Rosary, meditating on the Joyful Mysteries that most strongly personify life, from the moment of conception. They prayed with pink and blue rosaries handmade for them by Tony Kaelin. The colors represent all the boys and girls affected by the horror of abortion. Upon arriving at the cemetery, a beautiful pink and blue floral arrangement was placed on a monument dedicated to the unborn and to the sanctity of life. It sits just in front of the crucifix that towers above it, atop the hill as you enter the cemetery. They concluded their prayers by calling to mind the many lives touched by the evil of abortion. As they were walking away from the monument, some beheld the colorful horizon in the distance and were astonished as they witnessed the magnificence of a sunset, masterfully painted, in yes, pink and blue, a testament from the heavens as a strong reminder to them to never forget the unborn babies who are gifts from God most high. A very powerful sign illustrated from above and one to never forget.

In further preparation for their pilgrimage, they came together on



Youth from St. Mary of the Woods, St. Lawrence, and St. William parishes in eastern Daviess County, Blessed Mother, Owensboro, and St. Martin, Rome, gathered on the steps of the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Jan. 23 before the March for Life. Larena Lawson photo

Wednesday evening, January 18th. They began with Holy Mass, and followed up in the parish hall with a baby shower complete with gifts, the playing of traditional baby shower games, cake and refreshments. All of the gifts were given to Birthright of Owensboro to help them in their ministry of support to provide needed baby items for anyone who has decided, despite the hardships faced, to give their baby life. Participating in this opportunity to make a difference by giving created a greater awareness in the youth group of how much love, support, and money it really takes to care for a child.

From the very beginning, Father Andy told this group that, "pilgrimage is marked with a certain amount of hardship and prayer." They began their journey to Washington on Friday evening Jan. 20 with Holy Mass and prayer for safe travel, asking to be accompanied by a host of angels to protect them on their way. It didn't take long before they met up with hardship. A trip that was projected to take about 15 hours, instead stretched into 29 hours. Their tour bus broke down along the way, reaching only to Morehead, Ky. before experiencing engine problems. The layover there though, gave extra time for fellowship, for working together and for receiving the warm hospitality of the generous workers at Advanced Auto Parts. They discovered that even in the midst of hardship and inconvenience, blessings are

found.

On the road again, they left Morehead to sounds of applause and farewell waves to their good neighbors. Now, way behind schedule, they realized that they wouldn't make it to Washington in time to celebrate Holy Mass as planned. Father Andy decided to improvise and have Mass on the bus while en route. Having never done this before, the group made carefully set up an altar in the front of the bus to prepare for Mass. Those seated near the front were put in charge of holding things in place so nothing would fall. As Mass began, a certain sense of the extraordinary was in the air. The uniqueness of it all elevated the joy in being able to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass, for Father Andy and for the congregation. As they made their way down the highway, the glory of God's creation was visible in the clouds, the hills, and the valleys that appeared along the way, but more powerful even than that, was the awe in the celebration taking place, the gift of Jesus to them. They did not miss Mass after all, but were blessed again, despite the hardship of the delay.

Finally arriving in Washington and settling into the hotel after midnight, early Sunday morning, the group was very thankful to have gotten there safely. They got some much needed sleep and were up early, ready for their next adventure. After beginning the day with the morning prayer of the



Marchers for Life from St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville, from left, Jerry Morris, Darrell Hagan, and Keith Roby braved cold wet weather to stand up for life Jan. 23 during the March for life. Larena Lawson photo



Pilgrims for Life from the Owensboro Diocese found a spot on steps inside the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception to sing the Rosary just before the the National Prayer Vigil for Life Solemn Eucharistic Celebration on Jan. 22, 2006,; from left are Rob Wathen, Jordan Lanham, Owensboro diocesan seminarian Steve Hohman, Jerry Morris, Tina Howard, Sandy and Tony Lanham. Larena Lawson photo

Liturgy of the Hours, they embarked upon the next leg of their pilgrimage.

Visits to Arlington National Cemetery and the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center were made before going to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception to attend the National Prayer Vigil for Life Solemn Eucharistic Celebration held at 8:00 p.m. Thousands of other pilgrims from all over the country, including many cardinals, bishops, priests, deacons, seminarians, and religious brothers and sisters were present. The enormous domed Church rests high upon a hill and is ornately decorated with numerous chapels artfully designed and dedicated to Our Blessed Mother.

The vastness of the crowds gathering for Holy Mass amazed the first time pilgrims, which was about a third of the group. The others were familiar with having to try and find a place to sit in a pew or on the floor. All over the Basilica and also below in the Crypt Church, people gathered by the thousands. Some could be seen resting, others visiting various chapels, some going to Confession and others in deep prayer. Some even sang the Holy Rosary while waiting for Mass to begin.

As the Mass began, after long and heightened anticipation, they watched an extremely prolonged procession, lasting around 20 minutes. It consisted of seminarians, deacons, priests, bishops, cardinals and acolytes, who entered into the sanc-

tuary, each of them filing in as mighty witnesses of faith and hope for the Church in support of a culture of life.

The main celebrant for the Mass was His Eminence William Cardinal Keeler, the Archbishop of Baltimore. He welcomed everyone and gave special recognition to the great number of young people present, thanking them for their undying support for the lives of the unborn and for their powerful witness. He reiterated countless times in his homily how, "We pray for the triumph of life."

Cardinal Keeler extended that prayer into the next day by participating in the March for Life Rally and walk. The day was cool, with periods of rain, but a large number of pro-life supporters braved the weather along with him to let their voices be heard on the nation's Capitol. Nellie Gray, the organizer of the march, estimated the number of the crowd to be well over 100,000, and equal to the largest marches of the past. Others estimated it into the 200,000 range. Having no way to determine the exact number, one would only have to see the colossal crowd raising their signs high up in the air that read, "Defend Life," and "Justice for the Unborn," and hear the chanting catch phrases like, "Stop Abortion Now!" and "We are pro-lifers!" to realize that, now more than ever, there are people of all ages still dedicated to defending life and ending the atrocities of abortion. Toting signs and banners from all over the country, identifying themselves as church groups,

parishes, Right to Life organizations, colleges, youth groups and more, all were in support of an end to the culture of death in America that devastates us today. They are hopeful that someday Roe vs. Wade will be overturned and once again our people will respect life from the moment of conception to natural death, and in the end, their efforts and prayers, along with those of millions of other people all over the country and around the world, will indeed echo Cardinal Keeler's prayer and there will be "the triumph of life."

It is hard to understand, when huge billboards can be seen along the way that virtually slap you in the face with the graphic, bloody, mangled, mutilated and torn apart babies depicted, how any human person could possibly be for doing this to an innocent baby. It's unthinkable vicious and murderous! The evils of the world do not and cannot go unnoticed even as we struggle as a country to end them.

Not many protesters were observed along the way; a lone woman walking through a crowd of pro-life supporters with a pro-choice message written on her shirt, was all a woman from the Owensboro Right to Life group saw. St. Mary's group witnessed, toward the end of the march, just in front of the Supreme Court building, an enthusiastic pro-life crowd waving their signs and literally surrounding a small group of protesters and letting them know exactly how they feel about promoting life, trying desperately to enlighten them with the truth. A large group of women gathered on the side of the street were also trying to do the same. They held signs which said, "I regret my abortion." They are real life testifiers who have suffered the harmful, lasting effects of abortion and want to stop anyone else from going through what they have been through.

Reaching the end of the march, they can only hope that they never have to do it again.

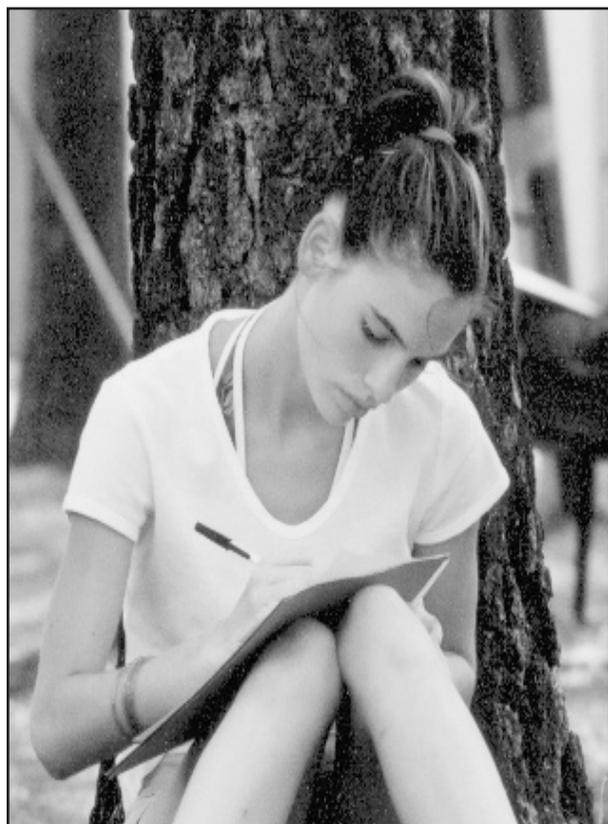
One word can sum up the whole pilgrimage experience and was stated by first time marcher Tony Lanham, of St. Lawrence Parish, upon his return to Whitesville. He simply said, "POWERFUL!" A powerful walk through reality, a powerful awakening to the holocaust of the innocent in our time, a powerful mission to try to end the horror, a powerful stand taken, and a most powerful display of faith, hope and love for the sanctity of life.

The Conspiracy Against Life

(W)e are in fact faced by an objective "conspiracy against life," involving even international institutions engaged in encouraging and carrying out actual campaigns to make contraception, sterilization, and abortion widely available. Nor can it be denied that the mass media are often implicated in this conspiracy, by lending credit to that culture which presents recourse to contraception, sterilization, abortion and even euthanasia as a mark of progress and a victory of freedom, while depicting as enemies of freedom and progress those positions which are unreservedly pro-life.

Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* #17

We Need to Do This!



A girl getting her thoughts together during a retreat at a Catholic Camp. Submitted photo

By Ben Warrell

Support continues to be outstanding for the camp and retreat project, but a few people have asked me, "Why do we need a camp or retreat experience in our diocese?" Actually, there are a great number of reasons why we need to do this. Vocations in particular are one excellent reason. In its' eight years of operation, a Catholic camp outside Kansas City has helped fourteen young men and women choose to answer God's call to vocations, including seven young men entering the priesthood. The unity and Catholic Identity it will build around our diocese are great reasons as well. The investment in our youth and our Church are also important motivating factors as to why we should create this type of facility.

However, one of the most compelling reasons that I have heard comes from Walt Mueller, the President of the Center for Parent and Youth Understanding (CPYU). He studies youth culture and at a recent seminar I attended he said, "Thank God that places like camps exist. Camp and retreat centers pull our kids away from the world, help them create their own com-

munity and allow them to experience God's love." That sums up what a camp or retreat experience is all about and how we need it now more than ever.

Walt flooded those in attendance with shocking statistics about youth culture in the United States. For example, the average youth between ages 12-18 spends 6 ½ to 8 ½ hours with the media per day and most of this time is spent alone without adult supervision or contact. The media include television-MTV, music, radio and CD's, movies, computers, Internet, magazines, video games, etc. These youth are exposed to 3,500 to 5,000 commercials a day, almost all of them preying on their fears and anxieties. The media is now the number one influence on the lives of our children. If they spend this much time with the media, how much time per day do they spend with God? Very few if any of these ads focus on the truth of God's Word and work in and through the Church. Another scary statistic is that youth who believe in God and youth who do not believe in God have the same morals. The line between what is right and wrong is blurred and morals are based on what feels right to them at the time. Our job as parents and people who work with youth should be to dive into our children's reality and help them sort out the truth from the garbage. We cannot ignore our kids or hope their problems will go away; we have to be involved with them in their daily existence.

A camp or retreat setting is a powerful tool we can use to help. It pulls youth out of the hectic, daily bombardment of buying this and having to look or dress a certain way to a slower, quieter pace. There is the opportunity for personal reflection and time to spend alone with God in His creation. Time to "Be still and know that I am God." Time to listen to what the Lord is trying to say to them. All that they are hit with each day is filtered out, the walls they build up are torn down and Christ's love is shared with them and by them.

The Diocese of Owensboro currently runs two weeks of camp in the summer. After going through the evaluations we found one that really stood out. A young lady said, "What I like best about camp was how we could take twenty people who didn't know each other and turn them into a community in three days and a family in five." Again, that is the power of God in a camp or retreat experience.

Please be involved. It does not have to be with the camp project, rather, find what you are passionate about and get involved with it. Our faith is sort of like watching a sport on T.V. It is fun to watch

but it is so much better when we actually go out and play. Be willing to share the gifts you have been blessed with to better our church and God's kingdom. Our faith does not mean much if we cannot or choose not to share it with those around us. As you have read above, our youth especially need our involvement to help them sort out all the untruths they are constantly exposed to.

If you would like to be involved with the camp project please contact me at ben.warrell@pastoral.org or by phone at 270-683-1545. If you would like to send a financial contribution please send it to the Catholic Pastoral Center marked Camp Dreaming. Also, please visit Walt Mueller's web page for the CPYU for everything you can imagine about youth culture. The site is www.cpyu.org and his motto is "Use whatever you'd like however you would like as long as it helps you and your youth."

Camp Dreaming Wish List:

- 1) Prayers for our project, our youth and our diocese.
- 2) Donations of land, time, money, knowledge or efforts.
- 3) Invitations to come speak and share the camp dream with your youth group and church.
- 4) Prayers for guidance by the Holy Spirit.
- 5) Talk about and spread the word about this opportunity.

Couple endows University of Kentucky chair in Catholic studies

By Catholic News Service

LEXINGTON, Ky. (CNS) -- A Lexington Catholic physician and her husband have endowed a University of Kentucky chair in Catholic studies.

The half-million dollar gift of Newman Center parishioners Dr. Carol Cottrill and her husband, Tom Rolfes, a retired religion teacher, provided the foundation for the Cottrill-Rolfes chair in Catholic studies in the university's College of Arts and Sciences. Their gift will be matched by the Kentucky Research Challenge Trust.

The Cottrill-Rolfes chair joins programs in Judaic and Islamic studies at the university, all of which are potential building blocks toward a future degree program in religious studies, according to Steven Hoch, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The University of Kentucky is among about two dozen other state universities which have departments of religious studies or endowed chairs in Catholic studies.

A search committee will begin work this year, with an eye toward having the professorship filled by the beginning of the 2007-08 academic year.

In remarks as the gift was announced, Lexington Bishop Ronald W. Gainer said the new chair "represents the fulfillment of a dream."

"Many in the Catholic community, over the course of the past 30 years, have envisioned a course of study at U.K. that would expose students to the contributions of Catholicism in the fields of philosophy, theology, literature, history, music and the arts," he said. "The chair will also be a great gift to the broader community."

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OCHS Boys and Girls Teams Capture All A 3rd Region Title

OWENSBORO, Ky. - Congratulations to the OCHS Girls Basketball team on capturing the All A 3rd Region classic Title. The Lady Aces now play in the 1st round of the state tournament being held at McBrayer Arena, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Ky..

What is the All A Classic? The All A Classic tournament provides scholarship opportunities open to all students of Class A schools planning to attend any Kentucky institution of higher education. This year the total amount of scholarships provided will exceed \$625,000. The All A Classic provides students with the opportunity to actively participate in statewide academic scholarship competition, a scholarship program, an art competition, a music competition, as well as statewide baseball, statewide fast pitch softball tournament, and cheerleading competitions.

Congratulations to Valerie Kamuf, Kimmie Kauffeld, and Brittany Rumage for being named to the All-Tournament team.

Congratulations to the OCHS Boys Basketball team on capturing the All A 3rd Region classic Title. The Aces now play in the 1st round of the state tournament being held at Eastern Kentucky University.

Congratulations to Jay Ivey, Andrew Howard, and Travis Owsley for being named to the All-Tournament team.



The 2006 Lady Aces team gathered for a photo after winning the 3rd Region Title: Left to right, back row, Audrey Kaelin, Jessica Goetz, Hannah Gerteisen, Chelsea Campbell, Rachel Greenwell, Brittany Rumage, Valerie Kamuf, Kimmie Kauffeld; front row from left, Carey Millay, Morgan Tipmore, Haley Woodward, Amy Winstead, and Megan Dickinson. Photo by Kevin Kauffeld.



The Owensboro Catholic Elementary third grade classes had their prayer day on Thursday January 26. The theme of the day was LIFE IS CHRIST. We were blessed to have Sister Rosanne, Sister Julia Marie, and Sister Martha Keller, OSU, to lead us. We read about Saint Angela Merici and made magnets with sayings of Jesus. Sister Martha led us in a song about being disciples. Then we made posters about ways we can live our faith by being disciples of Jesus. We shared our posters with the students and parents. At the end of the day, each student was given a wooden cross necklace as a reminder that LIFE IS CHRIST. Submitted by Karen Gross

Rebel with a Cause

A Young Women's Gathering
(Juniors And Seniors)

Sponsored By The Sisters Of Charity Of Nazareth
March 31 - April 2 2006

EXPERIENCE:

- * Time and space for encountering God
- * Lively discussions * Meaningful prayer experiences * Meeting young women from other U.S. areas
- * Fun-filled moments

DISCOVER:

- * Your own giftedness, * Your inner values
- * Spirit and hospitality of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth

CONTACT.- Sister Luke Boiarski, OCA, P.O. Box, Nazareth, KY 40048



Sister Christine Kunze

Rebel's Creed

I am a Rebel
When I see injustice,

I will help find a just solution.
When the world is falling apart,

I will help put it back together.
I define my own success, because
to me, people matter

more than jobs or money.

I have something
to offer others,
and I will share my time
and my talents.

I will do the right thing,
no matter how unpopular.
When others make

fun of me,
it shows how clueless
they are.

I will take the road
less traveled,
Because I am a rebel.

Source: <http://www.scnfamily.org/youth.asp>

Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week celebrates education that goes beyond preparation for a secular life; it is an education that prepares students for a Christian life. CSW also celebrates the high standards of excellence and the quality of the education available to all students in Catholic elementary and secondary schools across the U.S.

The purpose of Catholic Schools Week is to build community awareness of, and involvement in, Catholic schools throughout the country. During this week, many dioceses and schools encourage parents to take full advantage of the benefits of local Catholic schools by enrolling their children in those schools. CSW is also an occasion for schools to interest citizens in volunteering their time and talents to the local Catholic schools.

Often, schools celebrate the parish family on Sunday (January 29); the community on Monday (January 30); students on Tuesday (January 31); vocations on Thursday (February 2); and faculty, staff and volunteers on Friday (February 3). Schools often set aside time during the week to honor grandparents. National Appreciation Day fell on the Wednesday of Catholic Schools Week (February 1, 2006). This event was founded in 1990 to encourage Catholic school supporters nationwide to showcase the great accomplishments and contributions of Catholic schools to our country.

Catholic Schools Week is a joint project of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

New York bishops, parents rally for education tax credits

By Mary Ann Poust, Catholic News Service

ALBANY, N.Y. (CNS) -- With thousands of parents from across the state rallying to their call, and New York Gov. George Pataki offering support, New York Cardinal Edward M. Egan, Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio and other proponents of school choice took their campaign for education tax credits to Albany Feb. 14. They challenged state legislators to take the opportunity to "help all of the children of New York."

"This morning, I want to rejoice in all of the people who have come to the city of Albany to say they want everyone to have a chance," the cardinal said, "a chance at sending their children to schools of their choice, schools that are what they want -- academically, spiritually and morally."

Speaking at a Feb. 14 news conference where 300,000 postcards supporting the credits were on display, the cardinal said working- and middle-class families deserve to give their children the educational opportunities "that wealthy people have without even trying." He also thanked elected officials who support credits.

The Coalition of Independent and Religious Schools sponsored a noontime rally on the east steps of the New York state Capitol. While the cardinal and other religious leaders spoke at the news conference, busloads of parents, many with their children, and other tax credit supporters gathered at the steps.

Parents of children in public, independent and religious schools would be eligible for the credit, which could be used for education-related expenses including tutors, summer programs and tuition at an independent or religious school. Families earning below \$75,000 annually would get the full credit; it would be graduated for those with annual incomes up to \$90,000.

Parents who traveled to Albany for the event, some leaving home before 7 a.m. to make it, expressed that same sentiment. "Boy, could I use a tax break," said Pat Malewich of Manhattan, who has four children in Epiphany School. "In this day and age I'm sure that everyone, regardless of where their children go to school, can use some sort of break. The cost of living is prohibitive, especially in the city," she told Catholic New York, newspaper of the New York Archdiocese. During the rally, Golden led the crowd in chanting, "Save our schools!" "This is no voucher," he said. "This is a tax credit for everybody. ... It's protected by the Supreme Court. It works."

The Legislature is expected to take up the tax credit issue in negotiations on the 2006-07 state budget, which has to be balanced by the end of March.

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Celebrating Catholic Schools!!

National Catholic Schools Week began Monday, January 30, 2006, and at Holy Name that means a special visit from Bishop John McRaith. Pictured are Bishop McRaith, Father Bradley, Superintendent Jim Mattingly and two altar servers, Marcus Bailey and Logan Barkley. More than 2.4 million students in nearly 8,000 Catholic schools across the United States were celebrating Catholic Schools Week Jan. 29-Feb. 4 under the theme "Catholic Schools: Character. Compassion. Values." HNE Photo



Monday, January 23, 2006 was a BIG day for Holy Name School kindergartners as they celebrated the 100th day of school for the 2005-2006 school year. Pictured are students in Mrs. Beth Royster's class showing what they brought to school. Each student was asked to bring or wear 100 things. The students pictured are: Tyler Durham, Matt Moore, Will Stone, Simon Sutton, Belle Townsend, and Clarke Sights.



Holy Name's 7th and 8th grade academic team competed in the District Governor's Cup and took first place in overall standing. In addition to placing in all subject areas of testing, the team also took first place in Quick Recall and Future Problem Solving. Bishop McRaith asked them to come forward and congratulated them on their hard work and success. Also pictured with the team is head coach Tom Tweddell, Superintendent Jim Mattingly, and Father Bradley. HNE Photo



In the picture at left, Holy Name School announced their recipient of the \$1,000 Scholarship from Brescia University. Holy Name selects an eighth grader who lives out the mission of our school. This year's winner is Emma Bridges. Pictured with Emma is her mom Rosemary Bridges, Father Bradley, Bishop McRaith, and Superintendent Jim Mattingly. Emma will officially be recognized at dinner on the campus of Brescia University in April. HNE Photo



In the picture below, Bishop John McRaith took time out of his visit at Holy Name School to personally meet with the 8th grade Confirmation Candidates following the school wide celebration of Mass for National Catholic Schools Week. Pictured is Aaron Kendall shaking hands with the Bishop. Holy Name Elementary Photo

Workshop Aims For Climate Where Youth Can Hear That Still, Small Voice

OWENSBORO, Ky. - On Tuesday, April 25, 2006, there will be an Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry Workshop held in the basement of the Catholic Pastoral Center here. This is a regular gathering day for clergy. Fr. Richard Meredith, Director of the Office for Continuing Education for Clergy and his committee, graciously agreed to co-sponsor this workshop along with the Offices for Religious Education and Youth Ministry.

The workshop was designed after a two-year study conducted by the collaborative efforts of St. Mary's Press, the NFCYM (National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry) and the Center for Ministry Development. Participants will learn about practical methods for integrating youth within the parish community, elements of an effective youth ministry model, ways that youth learn and grow in faith, high impact program elements within youth ministry and methods for initiating changes in parish ministry. Go to <http://www.cmdnet.org>, double click on the Youth Ministry button, and then double click on the left side on the line for Effective Practice for Dynamic Youth Ministry for more information.

Tom East, Director of the Center for Ministry Development, will be facilitating the workshop. The hope is that pastors and all those interested in creating and/or sustaining/improving a climate where youth can hear that still small voice in our parishes will attend this day together, and that folks will be both affirmed and challenged as they hear the message of the day.

For information, call either Melinda Prunty or Patty Blair, at 270-683-1545.

Federal tax and budget cuts seen hurting poor, vulnerable

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The newly approved 2006 federal budget and the budget proposals for coming years will cut programs for the poor and vulnerable even as tax cuts and higher defense spending increase federal deficits, Catholic social ministry leaders were told Feb. 14 at a national conference in Washington. Ellen Nissenbaum, legislative director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, said the Bush administration's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal calls for deep cuts in domestic discretionary programs, some cuts in entitlement programs and tax cuts that will increase the deficit. "This fails the test of fairness, and it certainly fails the test of fiscal responsibility," she said. The 2006 budget reconciliation bill, just signed into law the previous week, institutes changes in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF, program that will lead to less Medicaid funding and make it much harder for states to meet requirements for federal funding.

WK Catholic Schools Hear Bishop Share What Jesus Expects Of Those He Loves During Catholic Schools Week Masses

Bishop John McRaith spent much of Catholic Schools Week visiting Catholic schools in Western Kentucky and celebrating Mass. The Western Kentucky Catholic caught up with Bishop John as he spoke with an assembly of over 1,800 Catholic school students, faculty and staff in the Owensboro Sportscenter February 1, 2006 at the Celebration of Faith Mass with the Owensboro Catholic Schools. Here is a text of the homily Bishop John spoke with the OCS family that day:

“This special celebration of our Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Owensboro is a real joy for me. We offer thanks that you have the opportunity for an education in this very special environment where Jesus is always first and you can develop a special relationship with Him.

“Many activities this week will help you to be thankful for your Catholic School education, but none is as important as this chance to gather as a community to celebrate the Mass, where the Eucharist, the source and summit of all Christian life, is offered in memory of Jesus. At Mass, we also hear the Word of the Lord and remember in a very special way how Jesus suffered and died because He loves us. As

we change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus, this makes Jesus present to us as the very center of our lives. The Eucharist becomes the food for our journey through this life to eternal life.

“With these thoughts as a background, we can better understand what St. Paul was saying to the Colossians in the first reading. He reminds us that we are chosen and loved by God.

Paul gives us a list of virtues that we — the chosen friends of Jesus — must practice to show our appreciation for God’s love. By doing so, we will journey as a community of faith-filled people through this life to eternity.

Listen carefully to what Jesus expects of those He loves. Jesus, the light of the world, came to change the world, and He calls us to share His Good News with a world that needs the light of Christ. St. Paul says that for us to be Christ’s light in the world, we should clothe ourselves with these virtues:

1. Compassion: To treat one another with love and to reach out to each other as true sisters and brothers of Jesus and each other.

2. Kindness: To be kind to one another and treat others as we would want them to treat us.

3. Humility: To live knowing HE is in charge. Jesus showed us what real humility is when He died for us on the Cross. Jesus came to serve and not be served, so we too are called to serve others, starting at home with our families. Whether you are a kindergartener, a senior in high school, or somewhere in between, you can make a difference in your homes by being humble servants to the rest of the family. This is also true in your school, in your community and in the world.

4. Gentleness: To treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Bullying occurs in our schools when we fail to treat others as Christ commands but instead treat others with great disrespect —

Continued on page 25



Sister Martha Keller, OSU, D.R.E. for St. Stephen Cathedral Preschool, shared in the Blessing of children and families on Jan. 30 during Catholic Schools Week. Each one’s name was called as the class and teachers sang “Each of us is special in God’s Circle of Love.”



Vocation Day at Holy Name School! As part of the Catholic Schools Week, students were asked to come to school dressed as what they thought their vocation would be in life. Pictured are: Cory Wilson, Priest; Emma Gillham, Dancer; Kyle Vinitski and John Allen Inge, football players; and Kaylee Alvey, nurse. HNE Photo



On January 30, 2006, Mary Carrico Elementary Kindergarten students in Mrs. Haycraft’s room invited the lunchroom ladies to share a snack at mid-morning with them in their classroom. At left rear, Mrs. Mary Lou, Mrs. Gail, and Lisa Carmon shared a drink and snack with Mrs. Haycraft, dressed as Saint Patrick, a bishop of Ireland, and her Kindergarten class. Staff Photo

A Glimpse of Heaven

During the days before and the day of January 30, 2006, to celebrate Catholic Schools Week many of the students and faculty from Mary Carrico Elementary took a lot of time to prepare for dressing like and imitating a favorite saint. Although the school met in assembly in the gym for a contest, and asked to judge the best-dressed saints, the Western Kentucky Catholic found it impossible to hand out prizes. So, here is a prized picture of the whole "Communion of Saints" from Mary Carrico Elementary School. We like to think of this image as a little glimpse of Heaven on Earth. Staff Photo



What Jesus Expects Of Those He Loves *(Continued from page 24)*

words or actions. Forgetting Jesus Christ, big kids beat up little kids or make fun of a student who seems different. Being gentle with one another is an important part of being a chosen friend of Jesus!

5. Patience: To let God be in charge and to live according to how God wants us to live — not how we want. Being patient with one another is essential in being a true follower of Jesus. Patience means accepting God's will for us.

6. Tolerance and forgiveness: If we have a complaint against someone, we are to remember that Jesus was so tolerant of and forgiving of others. Remember what Jesus said of those who placed him on the Cross: "Forgive them father for they know not what they are doing." In our Lord's Prayer, we ask God to forgive us as we forgive those who have done something against us. Imagine what kind of world this would be if we really were tolerant and forgiving of one another.

7. Finally – LOVE: To love one another as He has loved us. Above all, LOVE. Our Lord treats us with all these virtues, and St. Paul says we too must clothe ourselves with these virtues if we are to be true followers of Jesus.

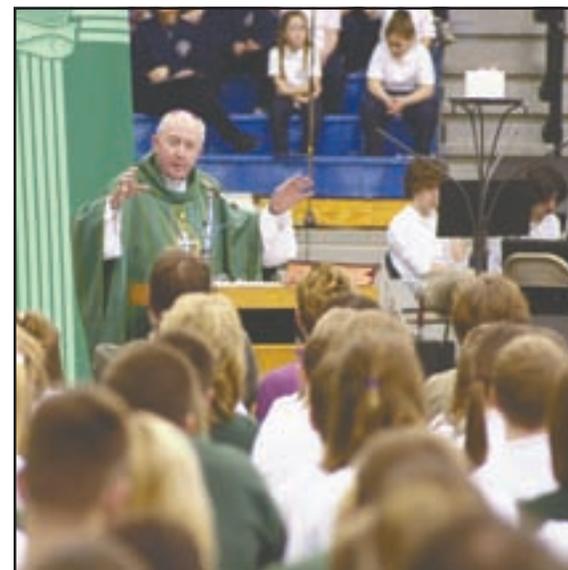
It is kind of like the many parts of a car. There are wheels, tires, brakes, windows, mufflers, bumpers, springs, and a host of other parts, but what part makes the car go? The motor. We need ALL the parts, but the motor brings them all together so the car works. If the motor stops, everything stops.

That is the way it is in life. If we don't have love for God and for one another, nothing else works...and we fail to be the friend of Jesus; we fail to be the light in the world; we fail to make a difference in our homes, school, playground, classroom, neighborhood, or any place else.

Well, loving God and one another is what being in a Catholic School is all about. A Catholic education helps us to have all the parts in place. Like the car we compared ourselves to – with all the parts in place, the motor of Love for God and each other pulls it all together, and we are ready to drive off and make a difference in this world.

Just remember, you are each loved by God in such a special way. You are each called to make this a better world so that we can travel together from this life to eternal life. Yes, Catholic Schools help you to be the kind of person that Jesus wants you to be. Thanks God for this school where you will be called to live just as St. Paul told the Colossians how they should live. He tells us that same message today. May your car be complete and ready to go. Maybe this could all be summed up by St. John the Baptist de la Salle, patron saint of schools, who said, "Look upon your work as one of the most important and most excellent in the Church, for it is one most able to strengthen it by giving it a solid foundation." Amen.

Bishop John McRath delivering the homily during a Mass with the Owensboro Catholic Schools, part of Catholic Schools Week 2006 celebrations in Western Kentucky's Catholic



Inequities in health care system challenge Catholic leaders, Congress

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- An Illinois man takes pliers to his own teeth to "treat" an abscess. A college graduate with a full-time job in Kentucky dies from complications of an easily treatable disease because she has no health insurance. A Florida woman pays an extra \$1,650 a year above her medical costs to get more personalized treatment and phone calls directly from her doctor. What's wrong with this picture? The issue of justice in health care probably has been discussed since before the Hippocratic oath was written. But as American medicine becomes more technologically complex, the gap between the haves and the have-nots is getting larger. Colleen L. Kannaday, president of St. Francis Hospital and Health Center in Blue Island, Ill., is one of the people working to narrow that gap. Appointed by the president of the Illinois Senate to the state's Adequate Health Care Task Force, she and 28 other task force members are charged with coming up with a plan that will give all residents of the state "access to a full range of preventive, acute and long-term health care services," without sacrificing quality or increasing costs.



OCHS Family Turns Mourning Time Into Remembering The Good Times With Norbert McCarty

By Rebecca Spurlock

On Tuesday, January 24, 2006, students of Owensboro Catholic High School gathered in front on West Parrish Avenue to pay a tribute to Norbert Earl McCarty, who passed away early Sunday morning, January 22, 2006.

Norbert spent fourteen years of his life working at Catholic High, where his grandson, senior Kirk McCarty, also attends. As students gathered outside the school early Tuesday morning for the funeral procession, they paid their respects to him.

Ed Simon, who is currently employed at Owensboro Catholic High, remembers the good times of working with Norbert.

"It was the third day that I had been working at Catholic High," says Ed, "and there was a broken window on the third floor. I was with Norbert and he said, 'Here, I'll show you how to fix that.' The only way to fix it was from the outside. Norbert took a metal flowerbox and hung it from the inside of the window (onto the outside window sill.) He told me to (step through the window and) get inside, and I did. I asked him if he had done this before, and he grinned, saying, 'Yeah. I thought you might enjoy it.'"

While listening to Ed tell this story, one cannot help feeling touched, knowing how much Norbert had touched others' lives, as well as their hearts.

Norbert McCarty was truly a religious person, and simply being at Catholic High strengthened that faith even more. He was a very intelligent person with great respect for the students and faculty at school.

After working side by side with Norbert McCarty those fourteen years, Ed Simon says, "He would let me do something that he knew wasn't quite right. Then after I was finished, he would show me the correct way to do it. I learned everything from him."

A friend and family to many, Norbert McCarty will always be loved and remembered even through his passing.



As if choreographed in a blessing, and standing together in a cruciform shape during a mourning time for friend and colleague in Catholic Education, Mr. Norbert McCarty, on Jan. 24 outside Owensboro Catholic High School, were from top and left, David Blandford, Sherry Orth, Martha Luckett, Amy Lambert, Patty Kaelin, Amy Rives, Jennifer Renshaw, and Nicholas Blanford. Jan. 24, 2006. Staff Photo



Holy Name's Seventh Grade Boys Basketball Team won the Mid-West Kentucky Athletic Conference Tournament. This is the first time Holy Name has won the conference which includes Henderson County and Daviess County Middle Schools. The players are: Alex Spainhoward, Chase Kauffeld, Mitchell Gabe, Sean Landry, Jarod Stone, Zach Berry, Brandon Potts, Patrick Neal, Leo O'Nan, and Seth Tucker. Holy Name Elementary Photo

Vatican says number of priests increases, but varies by continent

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The number of priests and seminarians in the world continues to increase, but the situation varies widely from continent to continent, the Vatican said. The most positive signs come from Asia and Africa, while Europe has shown a marked decline in priestly vocations, according to a Feb. 18 statement from the Vatican press office. The statistics were released in connection with the presentation of the 2006 edition of the Vatican yearbook, known as the *Anuario Pontificio*, which catalogs the church's pastoral presence diocese-by-diocese. Pope Benedict XVI met with editors of the volume and praised them for their work. It was the first edition of the yearbook issued under his pontificate. In its statement, the press office referred to data on church population, priests and seminarians through 2004, the last year for which statistics are available. It said the number of priests in the world was 405,891 at the end of 2004, an increase of 441 from 2003. About two-thirds were diocesan priests and one-third members of religious orders.

Three OCHS Seniors Named as National Merit Finalists

The Western Kentucky Catholic, March, 2006 27



Congratulations to OCHS Seniors Named as National Merit Finalists, from left, John Wathen, John Wilson, and Alex Payne. Staff Photo

OWENSBORO, Ky. - Congratulations to John Wathen, John Wilson, and Alex Payne from Owensboro Catholic High School for being named National Merit Finalists.

To become a finalist, each had to maintain a record of very high academic performance, be endorsed and recommended by OCHS principal Harold Staples, and earn SAT scores that confirm a student's earlier qualifying test performance.

They each then submitted a detailed scholarship application, which included a self-descriptive essay and information about participation and leadership in school and community activities.

John Wathen is the son of George and Joanie Wathen. John Wilson is the son of Mike and Teresa Wilson. Alex Payne is the son of Richard and Stacy Payne.

Catholic Charities U.S.A. Help Owensboro Diocese Tornado Relief

Special To The Western Kentucky Catholic

Catholic Charities donated \$10,000 to assist in tornado relief in the Hopkinsville area and throughout the Marshall County area. The amount allotted to the Marshall County area has been distributed through the newly organized Marshall County Volunteer Organization After Disasters. (McVOAD).

This is a faith-based organization patterned after many years of National experience in assisting after a major disaster. It serves as an umbrella group that unites all the help organizations and guides them toward distribution of resources to those most in need. The goal is to provide coordinated management of long-term recovery to a disaster along with providing assistance to individuals affected by this tomado who do not have adequate personal resources. This response is mostly aimed toward needs not met by relief systems such as FEMA, Red Cross, St. Vincent de Paul, and other disaster recovery programs.

Chuck Fischer of St Pius X Catholic parish in Calvert City is vice-chairman of McVOAD. Training has been provided to the McVOAD group by the National Faith-Based Disaster Recovery Organization on how to interview disaster victims, verify need, get proper paper work and documentation, etc.

McVOAD has incorporated as a 501 c (3) tax exempt status in Kentucky so all donations are tax deductible. They currently meet weekly to coordinate relief efforts but their long-term goal includes quarterly meetings of the executive committee so the organization stays active to be ready for the next disaster.



Nothing is left of this home but a few splintered boards, some framing, a fountain, and the concrete slab on which the house was built near Calvert City, Ky. after a tornado blew through the area recently. Photo submitted from Saint Pius Tenth Parish, Calvert City.

Join us at St. Francis De Sales Church in Paducah as we explore the spirituality of our parish's patron saint with...

“PRACTICAL HOLINESS”

INSPIRED COMMON SENSE FROM ST. FRANCIS DE SALES & ST. JANE DE CHANTAL



Rev. Michael S. Murray, OSFS, will lead us on this journey of discovery. He is Executive Director of the De Sales Spirituality Center, a ministry of the Wilmington-Philadelphia province of the Oblates of St. Francis de



Sales.

- Monday, March 13 11:00 am - Noon Fr. Tony will interview Fr. Michael S. Murray on his radio show in the Parish Hall. 6:00 - 7:00 pm Living in God's Presence; Living a Focused Life; Living Life Gently

- Tuesday, March 14 - 11:00 am - Noon 6:00 - 7:00 pm Little Things Mean A Lot; Perfected, Not Perfect; Living in Hope

- Wednesday, March 15 11:00 am - Noon 6:00 - 7:00 pm Persevering in Prayer; Loving God & Neighbor; Following God's Will

All Sessions will start in the Parish Hall. Monday & Wednesday Morning Sessions will be followed by Mass at 12:05 pm. Monday & Tuesday Evening Sessions will be followed by fellowship gathering with light refreshments. Wednesday Evening Session will be followed by an Italian dinner provided by the Bereavement Committee.

For more information please call St. Francis De Sales Church at 270-442-1923

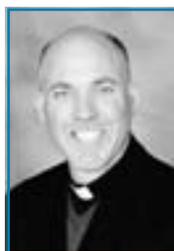
St. Henry, Cadiz, St. Stephen, Aurora, Parishes To Host Lenten Mission

St. Henry Catholic Church of Aurora and St. Stephen Catholic Church of Cadiz have joined together to sponsor a Lenten Mission. March 6 and 7. Fr. Paul Carrier, S.J. of Fairfield, Ct., will lead the Mission with the theme "Walking With Jesus in Troubled Times in Faith and Hope."

Father Carrier is University Chaplain and Professor of Peace and Justice at Fairfield University, and is deeply involved in and devoted to mission ministry in Latin America,

especially in Haiti where he is chairman of Project Pierre Toussaint for street children in Cap Haitien.

The first session of the Mission begins at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 6, at St. Stephen Church with Fr. Carrier presiding; the concluding session is Tuesday evening in St. Henry Church at 6:30 p.m. Each session will run about an hour and a half, according to Fr. Carl McCarthy, pastor. Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome. For more information, call St. Henry Church at 270-474-8058 or St. Stephen Church at 270-522-3801.



Fr. Carl McCarthy, pastor

Congratulations!

Marriage Celebrations for March 2006 - Anniversaries of 25, 40, 50 and over 50 years of marriage

Blessed Mother, Owensboro

Stephen & Bev Payne, 25

Holy Guardian Angel, Irvington

James & Mary Carpenter, 53

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Steve & Anita Hagan, 25

Ernie & Teresa Willingham, 25

Clint & Marlene Halstead, 40

Billy Joe & Charlotte Faulkner, 50

Daniel & Patricia Smith, 52

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Brian & Carol Genet, 25

Immaculate, Owensboro

George Allen & Veronica Hicks, 58

James M. & Doris Marsh, 25

Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro

Rex & Sarah Marsh, 67

Daniel & Joyce Shuler, 55

Thomas & Betty Clark, 40

Precious Blood, Owensboro

Guy and Linda Connor, 45 years

Trino & Dorothy Martinez, 51

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph

Robert & Pearl Thompson, 57

St. Ambrose, Henshaw

Jack & Chris Weber, 62

St. Ann, Morganfield

Bill & Sue Eckmans, 55

St. Charles, Bardwell

Wilmer & Anna Rose Rogers, 60

St. Elizabeth, Clarkson

Patrick & Louise Boone, 56

St. Francis de Sales, Paducah

Charles & Marie Riggs, 58

St. Jerome, Fancy Farm

Happy Anniversary

Jim & Faye Johnson, 54

Joe & Betty Thompson, 60

St. John the Evangelist, Paducah

Thomas & Helen Ellington, 53

Tim & Phyllis Ball, 25

St. Joseph, Central City

Richard & Queenie Schmidt, 61

St. Joseph, Mayfield

Bobby & Emma Lee, 51

Otto & Mary Jo Hayden, 77

St. Lawrence, Philpot

Fred & Paula Casto, 25

Victor & Magdalen Knott, 60

St. Leo, Murray

Ray & Leola Lafser, 53

Eldon & Earldora Heathcott, 51

St. Mary of the Woods, McQuady

Ray & Ruby Neff, 59

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville

Wayne & Janet Mills, 25

St. Peter, Stanley

Ricky Dean & Helen Goatee, 40

St. Peter, Waverly

Joe & Pat Clements, 25

St. Pius X, Owensboro

William & Marguerite, 56

St. Romuald, Hardinsburg

Craig & Georgia Lee, 25

St. Stephen, Cadiz

Tony & Lora Simning, 25

St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro

Martin & Clara Millay, 66

William & Helen Pence, 55

St. Thomas More, Paducah

Marcus & Opal Cooper, 50

Sts. Joseph & Paul, Owensboro

Micky & Barbara Wells, 25

Joseph & Betty Johnson, 55

The Gift of Love
ADOPTION
 Catholic Charities Adoption Services
 1-877-803-5064, ext. 128

Comfort & Hope... a message about grief

By Jeannie Boone

Suicide is a desperate act, the action of someone who has lost all hope, whose pain is so great they are desperate to make it stop. It is a cruel blow to those left behind to mourn and suffer the guilt, those who literally take the blame. But people who contemplate suicide often feel that their loved ones will be better off, have a better life, without them; drug addicts and alcoholics often feel this way.

As in any situation of loss, regardless of the cause, grief is a natural response and the severity and duration of that grief response is in direct proportion to who, what, when and how. Who died: spouse, parent, child, friend, teacher? What was lost: a part of self, love, future, safety, income, job, security, hope? When did it happen: were they stillborn, miscarried, old, young, sick, etc.? How did it happen: suddenly, tragically, prolonged illness, an accident, a suicide?

It's important to know these things to understand others and ourselves in mourning. When the mourner is a child, regardless of age, it falls to the adults in their world to help identify their feelings and explain the grief process, being alert for those moments when you can. Sometimes you have to make a moment, pull them close and say, "We need to share..."

Too often, children are forgotten mourners. The adults around them are often lost in their own grief, too devastated to function, coping on autopilot, believing, as they are often told, "Children are so resilient. They'll bounce back!" Those outside the family assume the child's caregivers will provide the necessary support. Children are resilient but they mourn deeply, as adults do, without the maturity to sort out the confusion and sorrow.

Some things you can remember to help the children in your home, classroom, or community:

- Using the child's age as a guide be honest, candid, and use correct words: a person who died is not resting or sleeping, they are dead.
- Don't be shocked at the child's questions, and if you are---stuff it! Answer questions honestly but don't elaborate unless the child asks for more detail.
- Don't be shocked if the child appears to be indifferent; just like adults, they may need to duck the pain for a while, or pretend it didn't happen.
- Children may be very open and discuss the event with anyone in earshot, repeatedly. That's good, they are telling the story and telling it helps us acknowledge the loss and start to heal.
- Children may regress and return to a behavior of the past, such as bedwetting, thumb sucking, tantrums. Their fears may increase or become more intense; nightmares are common in a child's mourning process.
- Children often feel responsible for the death, or loss, as if they somehow caused it. This imagined guilt could be devastating, hiding in their hearts for



Jeannie Boone

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ever so long. That's why is so important to talk, talk, talk, and talk some more.

• Most of our growing up years are lived on an emotional roller coaster; grief turns it into a monster roller coaster, so be aware, patient, and get professional, if needed.

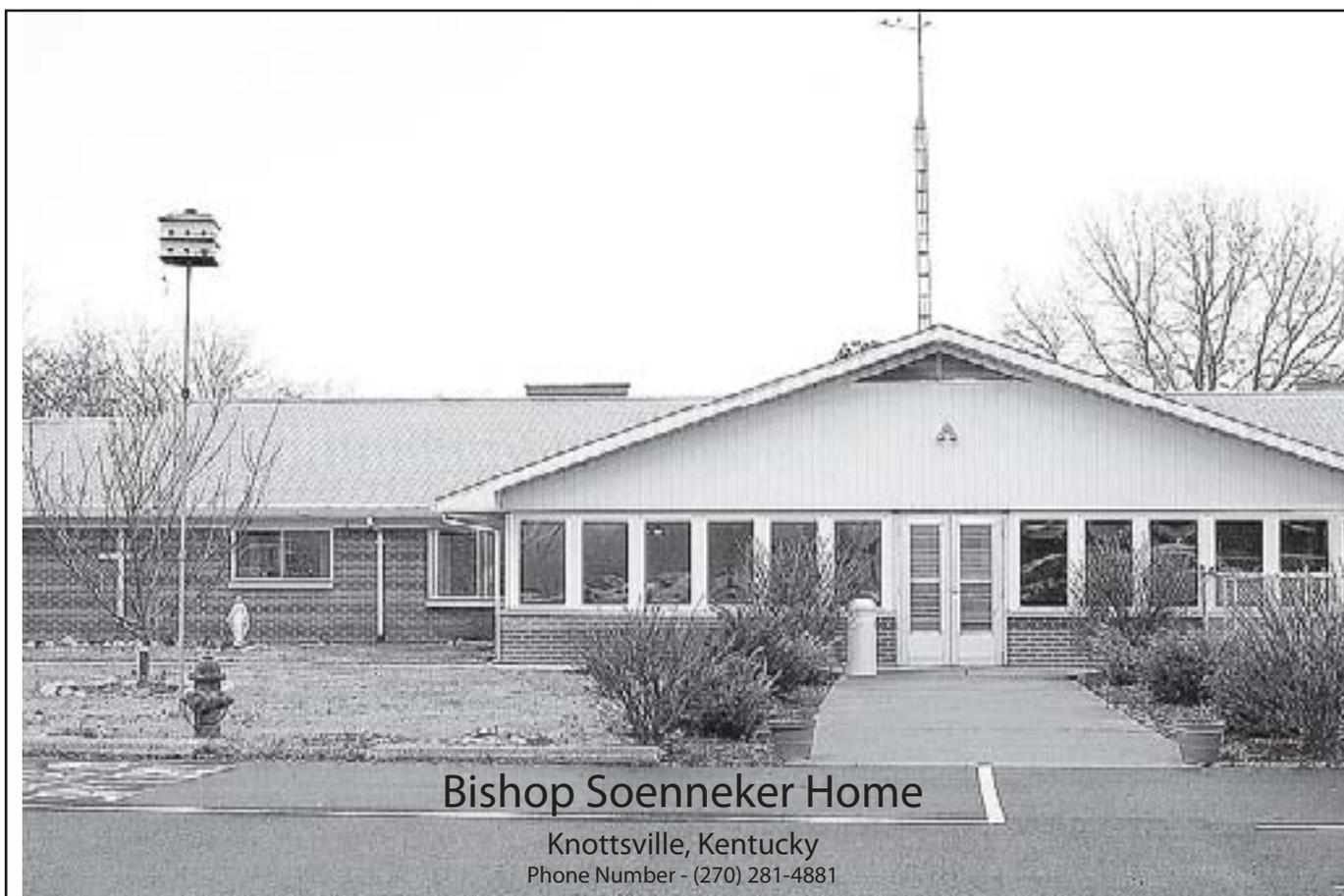
• School age children may invent ailments or problems that allow them to call home. In their mind, if it happened once it might happen again, they just need to be reassured that whomever they left at home is still ok... breathing!

There may be warning signs that professional help is warranted key words to remember are intensity and duration. These are just a few signs you might see:

- Fighting with other children.
- Disruptive behavior.
- Thoughts of suicide.
- Extreme, or violent, anger.
- Running away from home.
- Fears that progressively worsen, become debilitating.
- Abandoning long time friends or running with a gang.
- Experimenting with drugs.
- Sexual promiscuity.

There are small things we can all do to bring comfort and hope to our home and community. It can be as simple as educating ourselves about events we all face. We all grow, we all benefit, the world becomes richer... in a climate where the peace, understanding and forgiveness of Christ rules.

kyboones2@hotmail.com: Please, let me hear from you - Jeannie.



Bishop Soenneker Home

Knottsville, Kentucky

Phone Number - (270) 281-4881

The Bishop Soenneker Home is located next to Saint William Church in Knottsville on Highway 144. Bishop Soenneker Home is owned by the Catholic Diocese of Owensboro, Ky.

Services Offered: Personal Care With Loving Care; Less than \$40 a day for a semi-private room; Private rooms available for less than \$60 a day; Medicaid rates applied; 24-hour Nursing Supervision; Assistance with Personal Hygiene; Free Laundry Service; Free Monthly Haircuts; Free Shampoo and styling; Religious Services daily

Group Ponders How Did Bush's State of the Union Speech Address The State of Our Values

By Mel Howard

OWENSBORO, Ky. - On Jan. 31, 2006, a State of the Union Watch for people of faith was co-sponsored by the Diocese of Owensboro's Hispanic Ministry Office, the Diocesan Social Concerns Office, and Brescia University's Public Policy Class and Social Work Club. About 30 people gathered for the interdenominational and bipartisan event held at Real Hacienda Mexican Restaurant, along with over 150 other watches across America, to listen to the President's speech, and reflect with each other and for the local media on his words and the actions behind those words.

In his State of the Union address, President Bush reflected on the past year and articulated a broad vision, legislative and budget priorities, and policy agenda for the coming year. Explaining the reason for the State of Our Values gathering, event co-sponsor Patti Murphy, Director of the Diocesan Hispanic Ministry Office said, "It is important when the President projects these visions and goals for our country that the faith community has a prophetic response portraying our religious priorities and moral values. We want our voices to be heard and shared directly following the President's speech."

People of faith gathered around the country to watch the address to see if the spiritual values of justice and compassion were represented. They wanted to hear what President Bush would have to say about overcoming poverty and creating peace, for example. What he would say about immigration reform that truly addresses the problems and responding to the continuing genocide in Darfur, Sudan was on the faith community's mind as well.

"I believe," Patti Murphy commented, "that we did indeed spark a respectful conversation between people of differing views, and I hope to see it continued at other similar, ecumenical and bipartisan events in the future. Several people have expressed an interest in continuing to be in contact and the possibility of planning future events and advocacy."

Sister Suzanne Sims, OSU, commented via e-mail, "This event was well worthwhile and a good start of such conversations and actions AS AN ECUMENICAL community of faith in action. I am especially grateful and excited that so many students came from Brescia, our Catholic University, giving such a positive example of compassion and concern for the poor! Maybe one of these days we can have an active Pax Christi group again."

Richard Murphy, Director of the Diocesan Office



On Jan. 31, Aaron Wessman, a Glenmary candidate living in the formation house in Hartford, at left, led a prayer service with Brescia's Nancy Keaton, and Patti Murphy at Real Hacienda for a State of Our Values watch. Staff Photo

of Social Concerns, said, "This event was an eye opener. It showed that there are many people concerned about the values expressed in state speeches and the budget. It was interesting that the media too sought out this group to capture the thoughts of people other than those in public office to find out what was on the minds of citizens."

"It also said that people of Faith have the right to express their values in the public square, and will not keep our light under a bushel basket."

The competitive attitude, the flippant air with which President Bush delivered this State of the Union address turned off just about every person in the room listening, except one man who worked for a homeless shelter. He said, "I have to say that 95% of what the President said resonates with what I believe is best for this country right now. He said what I believe."



Dick Murphy, right center, reporting his groups thoughts to the larger group after the President's speech Jan. 31. Staff Photo

Except for that one man blessed with clarity, the group left the session of viewing and hearing the President's speech in a confounded state. Perhaps it was the sense of competition rather than a willingness to collaborate in the President's State of the Union address which fell most heavily on the spirits of the viewers here. Some worried that the President's message to Iran, to Korea, and to Burma read more like "Watch out; you're next, after we straighten out Iraq." The absence of a discussion about social justice issues in the speech was found to be a glaring message about where this country may be headed.

Host Centering Prayer Workshop

By Lois Rutigliano

OWENSBORO, Ky. - About fifty or so people from different denominations attended a Centering Prayer Workshop hosted by Settle Memorial United Methodist Church and St. Stephen Cathedral at Settle Memorial on January 26, 2006. Speakers for the event were Sr. Jean Johnson and Dr. Millie McElroy with Contemplative Outreach of Kentucky, who coordinated the workshop with Settle Memorial and St. Stephen Cathedral.

The Centering Prayer guidelines are to choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. "Intention and Consent are two important words," said Sr. Jean. The word, which is the symbol of your intention, is chosen during a brief period of prayer asking the Holy Spirit to inspire us with one that is especially suitable for us. Two twenty - minute periods of prayer time are recommended each day. The experienced fruits are in daily life and not during the prayer period.

Two of the Centering Prayer participants, Mike Canada and his wife Delace, shared their thoughts and experience about Centering Prayer. Mike said, "My wife and I attended the Centering Prayer Workshop in Owensboro and both felt that we learned as well as practiced a new discipline which is a gateway to spiritual renewal. For us in the church, it is easy to be distracted by ideas that take us from the simple truth of the Gospel word, 'Be still and know that I am God.' From the two times I practiced center-



After the workshop, Mike Canada and his wife Delace shared their thoughts and experience about Centering Prayer. Lois Rutigliano photo

ing myself before the Lord, not entertaining any thought, but just being quiet in my soul, I can tell it will lead me places in my relationship with Him that I have wondered why I could never before go."

Delace Canada said, "As the wife of a pastor from Washington United Method-

ist Church in Maysville, Ky., I have been interested in seeing the church expand the prayer ministry. I was excited to come and learn something new about prayer. 'Centering' was a new term and concept for me. I felt that the speakers, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. McElroy, were very helpful in explaining the method of centering prayer. They also answered our questions, and clarified the differences in the types of Christian prayer as well as in the difference found in other religions with their meditative practices. Twice we actually practiced Centering Prayer. For me, this is a beginning of a new discipline in prayer and a means to go deeper in my relationship with God. I have spent this week doing centering prayers. It has been an awesome experience; God's goodness, grace, and healing power are wonderful."

Built of Living Stones Workshop Presented at St. Stephen Cathedral

By Lois Rutigliano

OWENSBORO, Ky. -- St. Stephen Cathedral recently formed a core committee to form a process to assist the faithful in understanding the nature of liturgy, the space it requires, and the ways in which the physical building can be renovated to best suit the needs of the liturgy.

Mike Bogdan, Diocesan Director of Music, presented the first session of an informative workshop about art, architecture, and worship to members of St. Stephen Cathedral parishioners, on February 2, 2006, at 6:30 PM in the Undercroft of the Cathedral. The workshop was to educate and to enhance their understanding of the nature of the Liturgy, and to tweak their interest in becoming involved in a possible renovation process of the Cathedral. Much must be taken into consideration during the renovation planning process, such as the space for the variety of the community's prayer that extends from the primary worship of the Eucharist to popular devotion.

When it is decided a renovation process will take place, parishioner participation, support, and involvement of many is key for the success of a Cathedral renovation of this magnitude if it is to be successful. It is crucial for the church family in the words of St. Paul, "to come together as one."

Mike Bogdan presented a second par-



Mike Bogdan, Diocesan Director of Music, presented two sessions of an informative workshop about art, architecture, and worship at St. Stephen Cathedral Feb 2 and 9. Lois Rutigliano photo

ish education workshop "Built of Living Stones" on Thursday, February 9 in the Cathedral Undercroft. He spoke about how art and artist assist the church at prayer and how art evokes and glorifies the transcendent mystery of God. Attention should also be given to the way artistic objects influ-

ence acoustics and the various ways lighting may affect the objects. There are some wall areas in the Cathedral now that have been covered over with material that muffle the sound.

After showing some graphics of churches with different architectural styles, Mr. Bogdan invited those who attended the workshop to voice their concerns, comments, questions and opinions about the renovation process. Some of the questions were whether or not the church had available funding to begin the renovation. Others made comments about removing the mosaic or mentioned things that spoke to them in the church.

On a personal note, the stained - glass windows speak to me. They are visions of the spiritual world of saints, martyrs, apostles, and disciples and at the same time allow God, the true sun, to shine through and create natural light in the church. It is only when the sun rises and shines through the windows that the windows come alive and begin to tell their story.

Renovation of a church demands prayer, reflection, technical expertise, and study. It is not the work of the pastor alone or a building committee. It is an act of faith that should engage and strengthen the relationship of the entire community. "The key players in the renovation process should be the pastor, renovation committee, parish council, and the finance committee," said Mr. Bogdan.

The Catholic Church has a tradition of a Blessing of Throats on the Feast of Saint Blaise. People faith approach the altar for a blessing with candles upon the throat praying that if it is God's will their personal infirmity, physical, emotional, or spiritual, will be healed by God's



Grace. Here, St. Stephen Cathedral pastor Father John Vaughan blessed throats after Mass on the Feast of St. Blaise. Lois Rutigliano photo

GOD'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

KNOTTSTVILLE, Ky. - On December 22, 2005, two residents from Bishop Soenneker Home became members of our Catholic family - Lola Mae Neel and Deborah Ann Nugent.

Lola Mae Neel came to Bishop Soenneker Home on April 7, 2005. Influenced by resident Anita Howard, she started attending the religious services at the Home and decided to join the Catholic Religion. The sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation were administered to her.

Deborah Ann Nugent came to Bishop Soenneker Home on May 21, 2003. Her faith and belief in the Catholic Religion gradually grew. She began showing a desire to become a Catholic and also started attending daily services at the home. She received the sacraments of Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation.

This is proof that faith comes in all ages, young and old. With the good example and prayers of others, God's love will come through.

Our congratulations and prayers go out to Lola Mae and Deborah. You are living proof that "GOD'S WORK IS NEVER DONE".

Submitted by Bishop Soenneker Home Staff



In photo above, from left to right, Deborah Nugent, Father Tony Stevenson, and Lola Mae Neel. In photo at right, from left to right, Arlene Cecil, Dennis Rhodes, Deborah Nugent, Father Tony



Stevenson, Teresa Edwards, Lola Mae Neel, Anita Howard. Submitted photos

Rome Pilgrimage

Father Richard Powers and Saint Mary Magdalene Parish Invite You on a Pilgrimage to ITALY.

May 17 - 26, 2006 - 10 Days

\$2,599 p/p dbl occ from Louisville

Tour price includes round-trip airfare aboard DELTA, breakfast and dinner daily per itinerary, specially selected hotel accommodations, land transportation. Rome. Florence, Assisi. Tuscany. Siena.

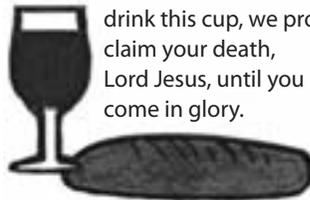
For information, contact Fr. Richard Powers, St. Mary Magdalene Church, 7232 Highway 56, Owensboro, KY 42301



New Bus Service In Rome Takes Tourists To Select Christian Sites

The new "Roma Christiana" bus makes its way toward St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican July 14. The Vatican and the city of Rome have teamed up to offer tourists the service that stops at select Christian sites. (CNS photo by Carol Glatz) (July 15, 2005)

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

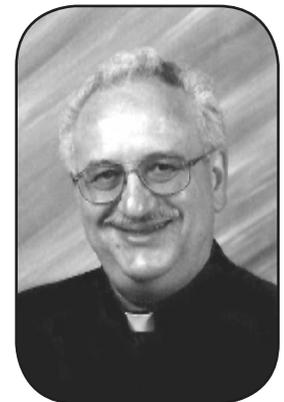


Living the Mass How One Hour a Week Can Change Your Life May 5-7, 2006

Retreat directed by Rev. Dominic J. Grassi

The Mass is that privileged place where we hear Jesus' words, "Do this in memory of me," and are sent forth with God's blessings to practice our faith: "The Mass is ended. Go in peace to Love and Serve the LORD." Together as priest and laypeople, we have much work to do. Transforming the world is no easy task.

Rev. Dominic J. Grassi of Chicago earned degrees from Loyola University and St. Mary of the Lake Seminary. His past roles have included pastor, teacher, guidance counselor, soccer coach, journal editor, and author of books such as Bumping Into God and Living the Mass.



To register, contact Kathy McCarty
(270) 229-0200, ext. 413
kmccarty@maplemount.org



Mount Saint Joseph
Conference and Retreat Center
8001 Cummings Rd.
Maple Mount, KY

St. Anthony, St. Mary of the Woods Parish Mission
March 12 - March 16, 2006 At St. Anthony Church in Axtel, Ky
Confessions will be heard each evening
before and after the 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour and Talk.
Masses are Monday at 9 a.m., Tuesday at 9 a.m. ; Wednesday at 6:00 p.m., Thursday at 7:00 p.m. For information, call 1-270-257-2132

Editor's Note Trinity High School staff submitted the following two of the three winning essays from the Trinity High School, Whitesville, Ky., Catholic Schools Week essay contest.

How My Religious Education Will Affect My Future

By Michelle Rhodes, THS junior

Most teachers teach you what they know about math, science, or English, but at a Catholic school you are able to receive the most important lessons in life. You also get an education in religion and faith. In a small school like Trinity you learn these things on a close, personal, one-on-one level.

The education and spiritual knowledge I receive at this Catholic school is not just helping me through grade school and high school, but will also help me when it comes to getting into college, getting a job, or starting a business, and that spiritual education is much more useful than any curriculum taught at any public school. My Catholic education will also prepare me for everyday roles such as being a good mother, faithful wife, better Christian, and a respected person.

Growing up in a society like the one in which we live today, faith is the only thing we have to rely on to get us through the trials and suffering we must endure. Having faith can get you through tough situations, bad times, and hard decisions. At a Catholic school, students and teachers can be open with their faith and have the chance to pray or talk about God whenever needed. Being able to talk about God allows us to talk about the impact His plan has on our future.

When I go off to college, the morals and values I have learned and by which I've lived during high school will come into play. I hope that I will be able to at least change one person's life by my Christian actions. After going to such a small high school for the past few years, I will probably be turning to my faith numerous times while I am attending college. I have my faith to guide me from the wrong decisions I could make when trying to fit into a new, much larger crowd. The good morals and ethics by which I have been living will prevent my falling victim to the peer pressure of today's society.

I am very appreciative of my parents for sacrificing so much to be able to send me to a Catholic school. With my dad being in the Air Force and our having to move around so much, my parents often went out of their way to be able to send us to a Catholic school. Even on vacations, every Sunday involved going to mass, no matter where we were or what country we were in. My Catholic religion has become a pillar in my life, and it will always be. It is a combination of what I have learned from priests, my teachers, my parents, and even my friends. It is a pillar of strength, I hope, that will be as strong or stronger as I grow older, when I am able to pass my faith and knowledge down to my children. That faith, I believe, will be as supportive and encouraging to them as it has been to me.

I know the importance of being a practicing Catholic

Josh Bellamy, THS senior

Anything and everything we do each minute of our lives affects our future, some choices and decisions more than others. One of the biggest decisions in my life was choosing a Catholic school. My parents were the ones who first put me in a Catholic school, but it has been my choice to stay here at St. Mary's and Trinity. I incorporate my faith into every thing I do in life. Being taught day in and day out by teachers who share the same beliefs as I do has only helped instill Jesus' words into my heart.

I have been taking religion classes for twelve years now, and every day I am still learning something new about my faith. It is a great feeling to know that if I ever have any questions about my faith I can look to the many teachers and administrators for an answer. The great thing about our religion classes is the discussion we have. Textbooks do not hold all the solutions to many of today's problems surrounding youth. It is a great tool to have discussions with your religion teachers.

Being able to participate in Mass and the sacraments while at school will also help me in continuing that practice when I move away to college. Too many of today's young Catholics tend to sway away from the church after their high school graduations, a problem that is present in our own community. I can now honestly say that, with the education I have learned from school and my parents, I know the importance of being a practicing Catholic, no matter how busy I might seem.

Colleges and workplaces are not only looking for someone who is intelligent and smart, but someone who has morals. They do not want to have students or workers who cannot be trusted. My education has taught me this. I cannot cheat and lie my way to a successful life in the eyes of God. Even if we do accumulate all the riches here on earth, they will not amount to anything when we pass this world for His.

I hope that everywhere I go, all the people I encounter will be able to tell that I did not just receive a normal academic education, but a spiritual one as well. I am sure that if those whom I meet have any faith in them they will be able to witness the faith that has been given to me. Even if I do not achieve all the goals I have set for my life, I hope that, by the end of it all, I can say that I lived a life for Christ. We are here on earth to live for God, and we should try to better our lives and live more like Jesus did. God is the most important thing in our lives.

I guess that you could say that St. Mary's and Trinity are little pieces of heaven on earth. I will never stop thinking about how lucky to have attended a Catholic school all of my life.

The Gifts Of The Holy Spirit

By Father Ray Clark

We are looking at the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which each baptized person receives. We have looked at the gifts of Wisdom and Understanding, we now look at the gifts of Knowledge and Counsel.

The gift of Knowledge.

St. Therese, the Little Flower, wrote: "Jesus teaches me deep down inside, not by means of books, because I do not understand that which I read, but [he says to me:] 'I want to make you read in the book of life, where is contained the science of love.'" The science of love which she describes is the science or knowledge of the saints, a divine knowledge.

Through the gift of Knowledge we judge what is truly important. We know that things of the world cannot bring us happiness, only God satisfies our deepest longings. This is conversion.

A wonderful example of this conversion is St. Francis of Assisi, who removed even the clothes he was wearing and returned them to his father. As Francis embraced Lady Poverty, he began to see God's presence in all created things. He called the sun 'brother' and the moon 'sister.' By this gift of Knowledge the saints perceive the value of things in the eternal order. The saints accept and even desire suffering for they see its infinite value.

The gift of Counsel

In the Old Testament book of Tobit, the angel Raphael guides Tobias on a dangerous journey. This is an image for how the gift of Counsel directs us in our lives. Counsel allows us to make decisions when we are paralyzed by fear. Counsel enables us to decide with courage and to reach peace in the decision we have made. Counsel guides us not only in the major decisions of life, such as choosing a vocation, but also in the everyday decisions of life: what to eat or not to eat, when to go to bed and when to rise. The gift of Counsel comes as a peaceful attraction to do something.

Counsel helps us to overcome our tendency to run our own lives. Through the gift of Counsel we turn over our lives to God and allow God to run our lives. The Holy Spirit often works through the failures and not the successes of our lives. Counsel also helps us to see how to contribute our gifts for the good of the Church and community.

Next month we will look at the gifts of Fear of the Lord and Fortitude.

By Edie Keeney

PADUCAH, Ky. - For most Christians the Christmas season includes the 4 Sundays just before Christmas called Advent. Advent is a season of reflection and waiting for the coming of the Christ Child. Then, Christmas Day on December 25th followed by the 12th day of Christmas, January 6th called Epiphany or the Three Kings Day. This religious holiday originated with the ancient Jewish custom that required mothers to present their first-born child to God. Mary and Joseph followed this Jewish custom and presented Jesus in the temple in Jerusalem. In Latin America, the end of the Christmas season is Candlemas Day, February 2nd, the 40th day after Christmas. Traditionally, Epiphany is the time that the children wake up to find their gifts under the Christmas tree guarded by the Baby Jesus in Nativity scene. Traditional Hispanic food is served and a family is chosen to host the Candlemas feast. This tradition varies somewhat from country to country but the meaning of the season is the same.

There is a growing Hispanic community in the West Kentucky area and as they are learning this North American culture they are eager to share their culture. This sharing will lead to better understanding and will enrich everyone. Many of their traditional fiestas and holidays originate from their religious roots which play an important part in their lives and influence their strong family values. The Candlemas celebration is a part of their Christmas tradition. On the Three Kings Day a member of each extended family hosts a fiesta/party. The figure of the Baby Jesus has been nestled in the family's nativity scene since January 6th to rest there until Candlemas Day. Children representing the Three Kings remove the Baby Jesus and he is dressed in special clothing and placed on a special pedestal to rest there until Advent the following year. Participants bring presents for the children and food for the dinner. Traditional music and dances are an important part of the celebration. Jose and Victoria Sanchez hosted this year's Candlemas celebration for all their family and friends on February 11.

My husband and I arrived at Sanchez's home to celebrate Three Kings Day with their family and friends. As the large group began arriving there was much talk as the preparations continued. Delicious smells drew us to the kitchen where very

Three Kings Day Celebration And Candlemas Day



John taking Baby Jesus from the manger. Edie Keeney photo

large pots of simmering pozole (a delicious hardy soup of chicken and vegetables in a spicy broth) and plates of tamales teased our appetites. When all was ready the group moved to a converted garage where several tables and chairs were clustered around the perimeter of the room. The Nativity figures were displayed in a large decorated manger. Everyone gathered around this Nativity scene to pray the Rosary together. Following the Rosary, a young boy and a young man, representing the Kings, removed figures of the Baby Jesus from the manger, dressed them in beautiful white clothing and carried around the room where everyone kissed the babies. Someone turned on the music and it was now time for the celebration to start; up until then the atmosphere was very prayerful. One of the ladies sprinkled a handful of confetti on each person's head to signify that this was a celebration. The guests had all brought bags of fruit, which were now put on the tables along with hot steaming bowls of pozole. After the meal, the traditional dancing began. A little two-year old boy, dressed in a traditional Mexican costume carrying a wooden cane, began the dancing. The dance was very intricate; it would have been difficult for an older child or an adult to execute all the steps in time with the music but the child seemed to have no trouble at all. When his dance was finished the door opened and 3 men and a young boy entered dressed in the same traditional costumes but with their faces covered with plastic masks of faces of very old men. They too leaned on wooden canes. The Baile de Viejitos (Dance of the Old Men) started slowly but increased in rhythm and intensity, as they

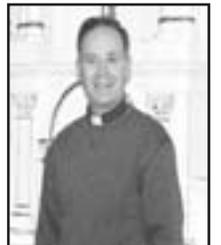
seemed to gain strength and vigor being inspired by their faith in the Baby Jesus, according to the tradition. There were two crosses that had been decorated with clothing and typical household linens that the women had decorated with beautiful embroidery. These were carried by the two, who had represented the Kings, in a slow dance around the center of the room. It is the tradition that gifts are given during this celebration. The items on the crosses were gifts to the young man and the boy. Gifts of fruit, tamales and a sweet bread in the shape of a bird were given to each family as they left the celebration. The figures of the Baby Jesus will be placed on pedestals in the families' homes until the next Advent.

My husband and I really felt honored to be welcomed into their home and to share in their traditional Christmas celebration. With so much of what we do here in the USA starts so early before the 25th and ends the day after Christmas that we tend to forget the Christmas Season really starts on December 25 and ends after Epiphany or 40 days after Christmas as in Latin America. The spiritual preparation that gives meaning to Advent is so often lost in the frantic atmosphere that is so common here in the USA. Last night was an example of the true spirit of the Christmas Season.

The New Pastor at St. Francis de Sales

By Edie Keeney

PADUCAH, Ky. - October 2005 brought a new pastor to St. Francis de Sales in Paducah. Fr. David (Dave) Willett has a much different background than other pastors that have come to the church. Father Dave retired after a 34-year career in the active Army and the Army Reserves and during that time he has traveled all around the world. He began his career as an infantryman serving in Vietnam from 1967 - 1969. After his tour of duty in Vietnam, he attended college in Murray where he earned Bachelor's degrees in agriculture and business. Father Willett received a Masters in Divinity from St. Meinrad's School of Divinity in 1979. During his studies at St. Meinrad, he rejoined the Army National Guard, and in 1976, received his commission as a Second Lieutenant as a Chaplain Candidate. After ordination he was assigned to Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Owensboro. In 1981, he returned to active duty as an Army Chaplain. As a Chaplain, Father Willett has served in many areas of the world - Egypt, Germany, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, Italy, and several Army bases in the States. In his 34 years of service, he received many awards including the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, and a Purple Heart. He retired from active duty as a Colonel in May 2005 and returned to the diocese of Owensboro.



Father Dave was born and raised on a farm in rural Western Kentucky near Fancy Farm. He returned to Fancy Farm to retire, be a pastor of a small church and build his retirement home. He was the pastor of St. Mary of the Fields in LaCenter, Ky. for only a few months when the need for a pastor for St. Francis de Sales, not the small rural church where he hoped to retire, arose and, once again, Fr. Dave answered the call to serve. In October of 2005, Fr. Dave came to St. Francis. He was enthusiastically welcomed by a grateful congregation with the ever-popular church potluck, which was enjoyed by all, and since then several others have followed.

Fr. Dave talked about his time in the Army and how the young men and women in the military really do need a chaplain even if they are not in a church or have any religious belief. "A chaplain brings some stability into their lives, some measure of home while they are with the unit. In the Army, a chaplain is assigned to a unit. Some units are as small as 650 to 700 soldiers and as large as 1000. The tempo of the unit, the confidence that the soldiers have in themselves and their commanders, their spiritual dimension, all of these are so important. The chaplain acts as a liaison between the officers and the enlisted troops. It is terribly important, especially in a war zone, to be able to speak to someone and to have someone to speak for him or her. Some commanders appreciate this more than some others do, but chaplains are needed and make the tours of duty much easier for all the troops. During my time in the Army, I always felt that I could do a lot of good with the young men and women and while I have feelings about being out, I don't miss it at all."

American Catholics Identify Songs That Make A Difference

Survey Results Published By The National Association Of Pastoral Musicians

A wide variety of liturgical songs has fostered and nourished the faith life of American Catholics, according to the results of a survey by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM). The online survey was conducted this past fall and drew responses from music directors, clergy, choir members, students, and ordinary parishioners. Survey results are published in the February-March, 2006 issue of Pastoral Music, the Association's bimonthly journal.

"A surprising finding of the survey – and perhaps the most important one – was the lack of any clearly dominant choice," according to NPM President J. Michael McMahon. In fact, the three thousand survey respondents named 670 different songs as most important for their own life of faith.

The survey also revealed that U.S. Catholics are inspired by songs based on a diversity of musical styles, including traditional, contemporary, and others. Just over

half of the top twenty-five songs were contemporary Catholic liturgical songs written after 1965, including On Eagle's Wings; Here I Am, Lord; and Be Not Afraid. About a quarter of the top twenty-five songs were traditional Catholic hymns that predate the Second Vatican Council, including Holy God, We Praise Thy Name; Ave Maria; and Panis Angelicus. A number of participants identified hymns from Protestant and Evangelical sources, including How Great Thou Art and Amazing Grace.

Many respondents related their choice to an important celebration – the funeral of a loved one or friend, the baptism of a child, a wedding, or a religious profession. Funeral celebrations were by far the most commonly cited occasions on which a particular song made a lasting effect. A large number of participants chose songs that they recalled from childhood and that have continued to evoke and express a connection to faith and to the Church.

The following are the top twenty-five songs identified by respondents to the NPM survey as making a difference in their own lives of faith. Numbers in parentheses reflect the number of responses.

1 On Eagle's Wings (242); 2 Here I Am, Lord (152); 3 Be Not Afraid (146); 4 You Are Mine (138); 5 How Great Thou Art (76); 6 Holy God, We Praise Thy Name (70); 7 Amazing Grace (69); 8 All Are Welcome (58); 8 Prayer of St. Francis (43); 10 Ave Maria (42); 11 We Are Called (38); 12 Let There Be Peace on Earth (36); 13 I Am the Bread of Life (30); 14 The Summons (30); 15 Panis Angelicus (29); 16 The Servant Song—Gillard (29); 17 Pescador de Hombres (28); 18 Servant Song—McCargill (28); 19 Shepherd Me, O God (27); 20 Ave Verum Corpus (26); 21 Lord of the Dance (24); 22 One Bread, One Body (24); 23 Tantum Ergo (24); 24 Hosea (23); 25 Pange Lingua (23)

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS fosters the art of musical liturgy. NPM members serve the Catholic Church in the United States as musicians, clergy, liturgists, and other leaders of prayer. NPM's 9,000 members receive a bimonthly magazine, Pastoral Music, and a bimonthly newsletter for members called Pastoral Music Notebook. NPM provides ongoing formation for musicians and clergy through annual conventions, educational institutes, and events in more than 70 diocesan chapters. The Association also provides certification programs for cantors, organists, and directors of music ministries.

Submitted by J. Michael McMahon, NPM President, E-Mail mcmahon@npm.org.
Web www.npm.org.

New York bishops, parents rally for education tax credits

ALBANY, N.Y. (CNS) -- With thousands of parents from across the state rallying to their call, and New York Gov. George Pataki offering support, New York Cardinal Edward M. Egan, Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio and other proponents of school choice took their campaign for education tax credits to Albany Feb. 14. They challenged state legislators to take the opportunity to "help all of the children of New York." "This morning, I want to rejoice in all of the people who have come to the city of Albany to say they want everyone to have a chance," the cardinal said, "a chance at sending their children to schools of their choice, schools that are what they want -- academically, spiritually and morally." Speaking at a Feb. 14 news conference where 300,000 postcards supporting the credits were on display, the cardinal said working- and middle-class families deserve to give their children the educational opportunities "that wealthy people have without even trying." He also thanked elected officials who support credits. While the cardinal and other religious leaders spoke at the news conference, busloads of parents, many with their children, and other tax credit supporters gathered at the steps of the New York state Capitol.

MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH CONFERENCE AND RETREAT CENTER Calendar of Events March-July 2006

March

- 3-3 Henderson Chamber
- 3-5 Catholic Engaged Encounter
- 3-9 Kenergy
- 10-12 Charismatic Conference
- 12 Precious Blood RCIA
- 14-16 MSJ Quilters
- 17-19 Women's Retreat
- 24-25 Spirituality of Work Retreat
- 24-26 Immaculate Conception
LaGrange Confirmation
- 31-2 Catholic Engaged Encounter

April

- 2 Our Lady of Lourdes RCIA
- 7-9 Christian Women's Retreat
- 7-8 Immaculate Conception
Hawesville Confirmation
Retreat
- 17-22 St. John's Michigan Youth
Habitat Build
- 22 Our Lady of Lourdes
Confirmation Retreat
- 22 St. Anthony Church
Catechist Day
- 24-28 Spiritual Direction
Institute: Week 7
- 29 Celebrate New Orleans:

Center Fundraiser

May

- 5-7 Living the Mass Retreat:
Rev. Dominic Grassi
- 12-14 Catholic Engaged Encounter
- 17-18 St. Gabriel Seventh Grade
Environmental Day
- 19-21 Alumnae Weekend
- 31-4 Youth Group

June

- 9-11 Grief Workshop Weekend:
Rev. Dan Phillips
- 25-30 Christian Leadership Institute

July

- 5-7 Community Days
- 7-9 Associate Weekend
- 8 Jubilee
- 9-14 Sisters Conference and
Directed Retreats
- 16-23 Centering Prayer Retreat
- 19-20 McLean County Board of
Education
- 24-28 Spiritual Direction
Institute: Week 8



Center-sponsored programs are in **bold letters**.
For information about scheduling a program or event, contact:
Kathy McCarty, Facilities Director,
(270) 229-0200, ext. 413 or kmccarty@maplemount.org
8001 Cummings Road
Maple Mount, Ky 42356

No I am Not Angry At God; I am Grateful

I have had a question asked of me on many different occasions, whether I was angry at God for my husband dying so young from a rare lung disease and the suffering he endured daily for two years. My response is always "No, I am not angry with God;" I am grateful. I am grateful because I was a witness to Steve's suffering and I also witnessed the fruits of his trials.

Steve Onstott, my husband of 20 years, and the father of my children, Amanda 19, Brett 16, & Ben 13, was one of Christ's suffering souls. Steve, at the beginning of his illness, was human with the sentiments of "Why me Lord?" It wasn't until months later that Steve started to see the big picture of why he had to suffer.

He once wrote a letter to his sister in Seattle about human suffering. He said, "I blamed God and questioned him. I tried to put two and two together but could never come up with the right answers to my questions. Through the months afterwards, I came to see what we do on this earth affects so many others even without our realizing it. One thing that did come out of this was a lot of free time. Time to reflect, time to read, time to think, time for me to find God again." Steve found God again. He became enthralled in studying Catholic apologetics. He wanted to share with everyone who would listen, the beauty of our faith. The church that Jesus Christ founded.

When I would feel the pressure and anxiety of taking care of my husband and the needs of my children, I would go make many Holy Hours at Carmel Home or the Passionists' Monastery in Whitesville, Ky. There I would have long discussions with God and ask for strength and comfort. Because of Steve's illness, I was now developing a personal relationship with Jesus and wanted to talk to Him every day, one on one. I still go several times a week to Carmel Home and talk to my best friend Jesus Christ, my Savior, my life.

I would now like to share with you our miracle from God, the reason for this writing. During many of those visits to Jesus I would continue to ask God for a miracle for Steve, if it was His will. If it was the will of God for Steve to die, I would pray with much fervor for Steve to have a happy and holy death. I can't even begin to tell you how many times a day I would



Steve and Julie Beth Onstott

ask our Lord for that favor. I even literally begged God to give me a sign that Steve was in heaven, to help me to discern the sign if it would be given to me. Frankly, discernment isn't my strong point. I wanted something concrete and I felt God would be faithful to my request.

Steve's death was indeed very holy. He had his family and friends surrounding him in our bedroom saying the Rosary together. At the 3 o'clock hour, we recited the Divine Mercy Chaplet with our loved ones. He received all the sacraments - Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, and Holy Communion. He received the Eucharist, Viaticum, just like Pope John Paul II did before he died. What a tremendous grace from God.

Steve died April 16, 2005. His funeral was April 19, at 11:00am.

Our whole family was at the house visiting Steve and telling him how much they loved him. During this time, the holy Catholic church was proceeding with the Conclave, choosing our next successor to Peter. Steve said many times jokingly to our family that he was going to help pick the next Pope when he dies. My husband was given a St. Benedict cross to hold in his hand. There was a tiny piece of wood inside this crucifix. In this beautiful cross of St. Benedict was the Wood our Lord was crucified on.

I bet you know where I am going with this now. At the 11:00 o'clock hour during my husband's funeral, the whole world was told joyfully we had a new Vicar of Christ. It was at the cemetery that Fr. Pat Bittel announced to all of us that we have a new Pope, named Benedict XVI. When revealed to all of us the name our Pope had chosen, my whole family, especially my son, Ben, knew this was my sign from God that Steve was in His heavenly court looking down on us and praying for us as he

told me many times he would do. I would also like to mention that the one year anniversary of Steve's death falls on Easter Sunday this year, April 16, 2006. While Steve was alive he witnessed conversions of family members who left the church some 30 years ago and came back to church praying for his health.

I once told Steve "I can't take seeing you go through this all over again, the possibility of another surgery." He looked at me and took my hand and said, "It's Ok, Julie, I am offering all of my suffering for the end of abortion." It was evident that Steve understood the redemptive value of offering up his suffering for others, just as Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. He got it! Now it was time for me to get it!

No, I am not angry at God, I am very grateful. We love you Steve and thank you for imparting to us your extraordinary example of the beauty of suffering.

Sincerely, Julie Beth Onstott

Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry Workshop

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Catholic Pastoral Center Basement

Tom East, Facilitator, Conducted by the Center for Ministry Development

Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry is a workshop designed for parish leaders including pastors, youth ministry leaders, religious education coordinators, and others interested in developing dynamic parish ministry with youth.

Since 2000, the Center for Ministry Development and Saint Mary's Press have been working in collaboration with the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry to study effective practices in Catholic Youth Ministry. This study included interviews with over four hundred youth and adults and a national gathering of youth ministry leaders. This national workshop series will present the findings of this study and provide practical insights and starting points for parishes at all stages of youth ministry development. Parishes that are starting in youth ministry will find helpful guidance for beginning a comprehensive youth ministry. Parishes that would like to grow their current efforts will find new ways to reach youth and strengthen the relationship between the parish community and its young members.

Each participant receives a booklet of resources including information from the research and management books, assessment guides, and starting points for initiating change in the parish. Participants may also be interested in purchasing a copy of the book, *Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry* (\$15), which is published by Saint Mary's Press.

Participants will learn about: 1) Practical methods for integrating youth within the parish community. 2) Elements of an effective youth ministry model. 3) Ways that youth learn and grow in faith. 4) Models for youth ministry. 5) Methods for initiating a change in your parish ministry.

Goals: 1) Introduce you to the latest research on Catholic Youth Ministry 2) Explore the qualities and dimensions of parishes with effective youth ministry. 3) Highlight high impact programs that capture the imagination of youth. 4) Engage you in assessing your parish's current youth ministry efforts. 5) Affirm you in your current efforts and highlight areas of growth.

Schedule of the Day

8:30-9:00 Register	12:15-1:00 Lunch
9:00-10:30 Prayer/Session 1	1:00-2:15 Session 3
10:30-10:45 Break	2:15-2:30 Break
10:45-12:15 Session 2	2:30-3:30 Session 4

To register: Fill out the form below and return with a check for \$20/person. Checks need to be made out to the Diocese of Owensboro. Mail to: Office of Youth Ministry, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301 Attn: Effective Practices

Parish Name: _____ Number attending: _____
 _____ Pastor _____ Member(s) of Core Team _____ Volunteer(s) _____ DRE
 _____ Parish Council Member (s) _____ Music Minister _____ Youth Minister/Coordinator
 _____ Catechist(s) _____ Other

Karen Siciliano Enters Ursuline Contact Program

On January 22, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph lovingly welcomed Karen Siciliano of Springfield, Illinois, into the first formal stage of formation — the Contact Program.

“God’s great dream for my life is unfolding for me,” Karen said. “I am sensing a pull from God, and I can’t dismiss it.”

During the 10:30 a.m. Sunday liturgy, Congregational Leader Sister Michele Morek spoke of Karen’s response to the call of Jesus. “Karen comes to us in the midst of an amazing lifelong faith journey...a lifetime of listening to the Spirit and saying with the Psalmist today, ‘Your ways, O Lord, make known to me.’”

“Like Jonah in today’s reading,” Sister Michele reflected, “Karen set out in 2003 to the unknown city of Maple Mount...not quite as big as Nineveh! She DID find something she had been looking for, and a year ago, she began discerning a call to the consecrated life...particularly a call to Ursuline life, to a walk in the footsteps of Saint Angela Merici.

“Today Jesus stands with Karen at the Sea of Galilee and repeats the invitation, ‘Come, follow me.’ And Karen responds, freely and happily, ‘Yes, Lord...teach me your paths!’”

As Sister Michele explained, “Karen enters the Contact Program to continue her discernment. She will dialogue with Jesus and the Ursuline Sisters to clarify what she seeks. She dares to risk leaving her boat of ‘a full life’ to explore this invitation to



Karen Siciliano of Springfield, Illinois, has taken the first official step towards becoming an Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph. She entered the Ursuline Sister contact program during a Sunday morning liturgy at Mount Saint Joseph chapel January 22. Karen, left, is pictured here with her friend Sister Mary Ellen Backes, OSU, a pastoral associate in Springfield, Illinois.



From left, Sister Marietta Wethington, OSU, director of the Ursuline Contact Program; Karen Siciliano; Sister Suzanne Sims, OSU, Karen’s designated mentor; and Sister Michele Morek, OSU, congregational leader of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. Sister Michele remarked that the whole Ursuline community, through sharing and prayer, would take part in Karen’s

FULLNESS OF LIFE. This will be a time for Karen and the community to ask questions of one another and to develop a relationship with each other.

“Everyone involved will be focusing on the movement of God in each other’s lives. And the whole Ursuline community, through prayer and sharing our stories, will be part of Karen’s discernment.”

In the name of the community, Sister Michele welcomed Karen’s special guests — her mother, Philma, and her sister, Susan, both from Chicago. Her visitors also included Sister Mary Ellen Backes, OSU, who ministers in Springfield, Illinois; Larry Devocelle, also from Springfield, and Martha Little, pastoral associate for St. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro, all participants with Karen in the current Spiritual Direction Training Program at Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center. It was through her participation in this program that Karen recognized her call to Ursuline religious life.

The simple ceremony closed with the hands of the entire community extended over Karen in blessing. The blessing also extended to those who will walk with Karen during this time: Sister Marietta Wethington, director of the Contact Program, and Sister Suzanne Sims, Karen’s

designated mentor. Also recognized was Sister Pam Mueller, director of vocation ministry, who has walked with Karen during the past year of discernment.

The joyful celebration continued with the sharing of a meal amid more congratulations and expressions of welcome.

Karen, who holds a master’s degree in psychology from the University of Illinois, is currently a human resources manager for the state of Illinois in Springfield. A member of St. Joseph Parish, she volunteers as a member of the Education Committee and as a liturgy coordinator. She has also taught religion to junior high students. She is certified by the Diocese of Springfield in lay ministry, with an emphasis in liturgy. She will complete the Spiritual Direction Training Program at Mount Saint Joseph Center in August.

For more information about the Contact Program and the community’s stages of formation, go to www.ursulinesmsj.com, then click on Vocations and “Steps to Becoming an Ursuline.”

Articles and Photos submitted by the Mount Saint Joseph Ursuline Sisters of Maple Mount, Ky.



Karen, left, greets Sister Agnes Catherine Williams in the Mount Saint Joseph Chapel. Sister Agnes Catherine, who turned 101 January 29, is the oldest living sister at Mount Saint Joseph.



Karen, left, poses with her mother, Philma Siciliano of Chicago, at the Mount Saint Joseph Chapel after being welcomed by the Ursuline community. Karen’s sister, Susan Siciliano, also attended and played the flute during the liturgy.



Karen, left, is welcomed by Martha Little, pastoral associate of St. Joseph and Paul, Owensboro. Both are currently enrolled in the Spiritual Direction Training Program at Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center.

St. Stephen Cathedral "Keeping The Faith Afloat"

Western Caribbean Cruise

June 24-July 1, 2006 - 7 days. From \$1,462 from Louisville. For information and reservations, contact St. Stephen Cathedral, 610 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301. Call 270-683-6525. Father John Vaughan, Pastor and Cruise Chaplain, Michael Conley, Music Minister on board. Mass provided daily; other opportunities to share Faith and Fellowship; AM scripture study/mini retreat at sea.



\$400 deposit saves a cabin on this adventure! Don't be left behind.

Holy Spirit Parish, Bowling Green, Ky., Seeks Pastoral Associate

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, a vibrant growing community of 950 families in South Central Kentucky, is seeking a faith-filled, energetic, collaborative professional rooted in the spirit of Vatican II Theology to serve in a full-time capacity as Pastoral Associate. Pastoral responsibilities include: direct and coordinate Adult Faith Formation Ministries, oversee the Christian Initiation process and serve as resource provider for Small Faith Groups. Required qualifications include: Master's Degree in Theology or Religious Studies or equivalent; prior experience preferred. Salary/benefits are commensurate with education, experience, and Diocesan guidelines. A detailed job description is available on-line at www.holyspiritcatholic.org. Application deadline: March 1, 2006. Position available July 1, 2006. Send resume Search Committee, c/o Kim Miller, Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 2232 Smallhouse Road, Bowling Green, KY 42104 or Kim@holyspiritcatholic.org.

New MSJ Book and Gift Shop Manager



Betsy Cheramie is the new Book and Gift Shop manager at Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center. Betsy spent a year on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico where she met Sister Mary Matthias Ward, OSU, who told her about the job at Mount Saint Joseph. (Ursuline Sister Mary Matthias is currently the Director of Sacred Heart Retreat Center in Gallup, New Mexico). Betsy is originally from south Louisiana.

The Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center Book and Gift Shop has expanded its hours. It is now open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The gift shop contains a variety of books, apparel, rosaries, jewelry, quilts, religious statuary, handmade crafts, and much more. The address of the Center and the gift shop is 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, Ky.



TO TALK OF MANY THINGS

"The time has come," the walrus said, "to talk of many things; of shoes, and ships, and sealing wax, of cabbages and kings."



By H.J. Rumage, Jr. "A Hearing"

At this writing, the hearings for nominee to the Supreme Court, Samuel Alito has been completed. So what have the American people learned about this man? It depends on whom you ask. My problem with the hearings is not what I learned or didn't learn, but rather the conduct of the Senators who made up the committee. I watched most of the hearing process and never have I seen and heard such hateful, mean-spirited, character assignation of any individual being proposed to be a member of the Supreme Court.

The fear on the liberal side of the committee about Alito's position on abortion was obvious. Every tactic that the liberals could come up with was tried in a desperate effort to rattle him into committing himself on that subject. None worked! When Justices Ginsberg and Brayer were nominated to the Court, conservatives, even those who held pro-life views, treated both with respect and courtesy, and all the Senate voted for confirmation except a very few. The conservatives recognized that even though these two persons held different views, it was the right of the President to select the individual to fill the vacancy, and that unless these persons failed to have the qualifications to judge, they were obliged to confirm. Something the liberals have yet to learn.

One liberal Senator constantly hounded Alito for belonging to a club while he was a student at Princeton, a club which was open only to white males. It was later found that this same Senator belonged to a white male club at Harvard called the Owls, and was still paying an annual sum of money to this club. He claimed he didn't realize that it was a racial, sexist club. Yet he refused to accept that Alito didn't remember anything about the club he joined at Princeton.

When the debate reached the full Senate floor, America heard more and more slander and more and more condemnation. The same group of Senators, aided by more radicals from the far left, continued to rave about the Roe v. Wade decision using the term "Stare Decisis" meaning, let the ruling stand (or words to that effect). Only one time did I ever hear mentioned the "Dred Scott Decision." If the position of "Stare Decisis" is to be held at all cost, there would be no overturning the Dred Scott decision. One Senator used this time to promote her campaign position for what will no doubt be a run for the presidency. Another "wannabe" president from a location overseas tried to organize a filibuster. This failed miserably! When the final vote was taken, Sam Alito was confirmed. The disgraceful conduct shown by these radical Senators is really the saddest part of this procedure. It is equally shameful that some of them are Catholics!

The first ten years of "To Talk of Many Things" will be soon available in book form. Keep reading here to find out when the books are ready.

Declaration Of Invalidity (Annulment) Process

In an effort to minister to the people of Western Kentucky, the Marriage Tribunal is giving you an opportunity to submit your questions about the declaration of invalidity (annulment) process. Questions will be addressed in upcoming issues of the Western Kentucky Catholic. Please print your questions in the space below:

and submit to: Ms. Louanne Gelarden, Tribunal
Diocese of Owensboro, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301

OFL Ministry Has New Leader

By Ed Monahan, Catholic Conference of Kentucky Executive Director

We welcome Michelle M. Herberger of Louisville as the new Opportunities for Life (OFL) Program Director. Michelle began working at OFL February 1, 2006. She takes over from Catherine Bateson who led OFL during 2005 and who has returned to her home in New Mexico. We miss Catherine and her leadership but welcome Michelle with open arms.

OFL is fortunate that Michelle has chosen to bring her commitment, enthusiasm and energy grounded in our Church's teachings to this around-the-clock statewide assistance to women and their unborn children. She brings much education, a lifetime of experience, a large heart and infectious spirit to this special ministry of our Church.

Michelle brings a ministry and life focus to OFL that will help women who need an open, nonjudgmental ear and an accepting, healing heart. "I believe that God gifts every individual in a unique way and calls each person to use those gifts in service," Michelle said. "I am especially passionate about helping individuals and families to discover and name the presence of the sacred within the ordinary events of daily living, including those happenings that reflect pain and loss. The statewide OFL ministry is

an incredible effort that helps individuals discover God's presence in troubling circumstances while offering them the support needed to respond to God's call to respect all life as sacred. I am honored to have the opportunity to participate in this ministry."

Michelle comes to the OFL ministry after receiving in December 2004 a Masters in Theological Studies from Indiana's St. Meinrad's School of Theology. She has a 1997 B.A. from Spalding University, Louisville, Kentucky where she received dual degrees in Religious Studies and Philosophy.

Michelle teaches a course at Spalding University on Pastoral Care from a Family Perspective, and since 1994 works as a facilitator for the Archdiocese of Louisville Ministry Institute where she also teaches.

From 1999 through July 2005 Michelle was the Associate Director of Catholic Family Center. Before that, she was the Associate Director of the Archdiocesan Vocation Office from 1995 through 1999. Michelle was a director of religious education for children at St. Margaret Mary Parish from 1992-1995. Michelle is a member of NALM (National Association of

Lay Ministers) and was a member of NACFLM (National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers) for six years.

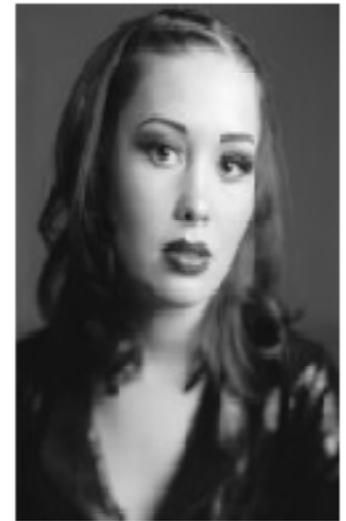
"Michelle Herberger is highly qualified to serve as Director of Opportunities for Life. She is a deeply committed Christian with a lifelong passion for the sacredness of human life. I honor her as a colleague of many years, of high intelligence and great compassion," said Louisville's Archbishop Thomas Kelly C. Kelly, O.P., chair of the Board of Directors for OFL. "The Conference looks forward to Michelle's direction of this ministry, which is so close to the heart of the Church."

Help us help her and her baby

Opportunities For Life

Call to find out more about how you can help...
(502) 223-5330

www.opportunitiesforlife.org



A Pro-Life Ministry of the Catholic Bishops

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION TRAINING PROGRAM 2006-2008

The mission of this program is to prepare persons for the ministry of spiritual direction and to enhance the skills of experienced spiritual directors, in the spirit of Saint Angela Merici. Participants will come together eight times for eight one-week sessions. The program will conclude with a retreat. Presence at all sessions is required to receive a certificate.

Week One:	Spirituality	October 9-13, 2006
Week Two:	Spiritual Direction	January 22-26, 2007
Week Three:	The Inner Journey	April 9-13, 2007
Week Four:	Prayer and Scripture	July 23-27, 2007
Week Five:	Theology Update	October 15-19, 2007
Week Six:	Methods of Spiritual Direction ..	January 21-25, 2008
Week Seven:	Ethics of Spiritual Direction ...	April 21-25, 2008
Week Eight:	Case Studies	July 28-August 1, 2008

For a brochure or further information, contact Kathy McCarty, (270) 229-0200, ext. 413, or kmccarty@maplemount.org



Have you always wanted to take a class in Theology but you don't have the time?

Brescia University now offers Theology courses online. Sign up now for Theology 105, Introduction to the New Testament taught by Father Larry Hostetter, STD. The course begins March 21 at 7:00 p.m. online. Go to www.brescia.edu click on BU Online and follow the links for more information.

You can also contact Father Larry directly at (270) 686-4328 or larry.hostetter@brescia.edu

Covington Seeks Director Of Religious Education

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, Kentucky seeks to identify qualified candidates for the position of Director of Religious Education. This diocesan staff member will facilitate and coordinate catechetical programs in the Diocese on every level, from early childhood education through adult faith development. Major responsibilities will include all aspects of religious education programs in the Diocese, including curriculum, sacramental preparation, and textbook selection; offering expertise and support through regular inservice training programs, planning sessions, and meetings; and overseeing the process for diocesan certification of religion teachers. The successful candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic with an advanced degree and appropriate prior experience. We invite interested applicants to mail, email, or fax a curriculum vita along with a cover letter, including salary history, and list of references to: Stephen Kopylay, SPHR, P.O. Box 15550, Covington, KY 41015-0550, skopylay@covingtondiocese.org, fax 859/392-1537. EOE

'A quiet servant'

Sister Bernadette leaving Guthrie after 19 years of doing God's work



Sister Bernadette doing some needlework during the 2005 Pumpkin Fest in the Owensboro Sportscenter. Staff Photo

By Ryan Craig, tstandard@kypress.com

At a fellowship hall in back of St. Mary & James Catholic Church in Guthrie last Sunday, members, friends and well-wishers wait for the guest of honor. A humble and faithful servant to the poor and needy of Todd County for nearly the past 19 years is being honored. There will be kind words, some cake and punch, but the real point of this reception is a bitter-sweet send-off for someone that only lives to help those who need her help.

"Here comes the sister," someone says as the door slowly opens and Sister Bernadette steps into the room. There is a big, beautiful smile on her face as she is greeted with hugs. Sister Bernadette is shy and the attention being given her is, as she will tell you, not her forte.

Born 84 years ago in Detroit, Mich., as Bernadette Hengsteback, Sister Bernadette went into the sisterhood in 1945 and has been serving God ever since. Still, if you ask her about Todd County she'd tell you that she wouldn't be leaving if the decision were up to her.

"The people are so generous and so outgoing," she said. "I really love the people here." There is no arguing that Sister Bernadette loves the people of Guthrie and Todd County. She could be often seen picking up and delivering bread to the needy for years. She is credited with being an instrumental part of getting the Helping Hands Clinic off the ground and she has served on the board of the Guthrie Senior Citizens and the Todd County Housing Authority.

For years she has helped low-income families with their taxes and found the work rewarding. "I love working with figures," she said. "At least for the past 25 years, I've helped people with their taxes. You will always have the poor, and that is who I like working with."

With no regrets about her work here, Sister Bernadette has been reassigned to the Glenmary Sisters Motherhouse in Owensboro. "I think (life) has gotten better for many in Todd County than when I first came," she said. "I didn't make it better; it just got better."

Mary Charles King, a member of St. Mary & James, said that Sister Bernadette's work is hard to describe because she does so much. "She is a quiet servant of the Lord," King said. "She loves children and the children love her. She crochets blankets for people. She delivers bread. She's just a wonderful person that the community loves and would love to see stay." Despite being in a county with few Catholics compared to the overwhelming number of Baptists and Methodists, Sister Bernadette said that she has always felt welcome here.

"Most of my work here has been done with non-Catholics," she said. "I joined a community to work in places where Catholics were few. I'm a missionary and I want to help them be better in their own church or join ours and I've always been happy with either way."

Sister Bernadette can be reached at P.O. Box 22264, Owensboro, Ky., 42304.

Divine Mercy Sunday

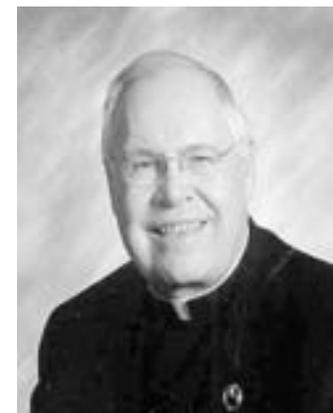
More Than A Devotion, A Way Of Life

APRIL 23, 2006
1:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Immaculate Church
2516 Christie Place
Owensboro Ky.

Speaker: Fr. Paul Henry

Eucharistic Adoration
Reconciliation, Talks
Mercy Chaplet
Refreshments

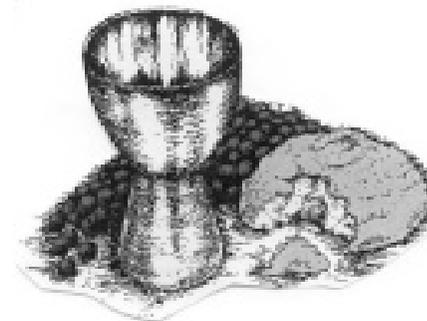


"Make Known To Souls Thr Great Mercy That I Have For Them And Exhort Them To Trust In The Bottom- Less Depths Of My Mercy." St. Faustina Diary # 1567

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Catholic Charismatic Conference and Retreat March 10-12, 2006

Retreat directors for the 2006 Charismatic Conference and Retreat will be Arlene Apone, an accomplished teacher, author, spiritual director and pastoral minister from Detroit, and Father Tom Forrest, international director of EVANGELIZATION 2000 and past director of the International Office for Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Rome.



Arlene Apone

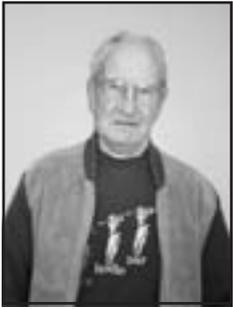


Father Tom Forrest CSsR

For a brochure or further information, contact
Kathy McCarty,
(270) 229-0200, ext. 413, or
kmccarty@maplemount.org



Mount Saint Joseph
Conference and Retreat Center



Clement Szymanski, St. Henry Parish, Aurora

"I retired from the United State Postal Service and moved here from South Bend, Indiana in 1981 on nine and one half acres of land. I love it here. It's the Promised Land!

I fish, golf, play tennis, raise a garden, tend my land and am the chief potato masher at church meals.

I like to stay physically active it keeps me in shape. I also like to watch PBS TV, Kentucky Tonight, Wheel of Fortune, the news and Martha Stewart. I'm a domestic engineer! I grow pumpkins and make pumpkin bread and I add black walnuts from a tree I have. I like cooking and usually cook at church

fish and chicken fries and also for the Knight's of Columbus where I am a member.

I start my day with reading 22 prayer cards which half are for my deceased friends. I then read the Living Faith Daily Catholic Devotions, which I find very inspiring. This is followed by my favorite prayers to St. Joseph and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

I stay up on sports and I like go to the local high school games. I am a member of the American Legion, The National Association of Retired Federal Employees and the Knights of Columbus. These organizations help me keep in contact with friends outside of St. Henry's.

I like being able to do the things I like and have my own time. I started work when I was just a kid delivering a polish newspaper in South Bend for about 4 cents a week. I did that for a long time. I was in the Army for 3 years - artillery division - and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. I remember being on a boat for 6 days in cramped conditions with 12,000 troops. Half of us were sick when we reached our destination.

I worked for the post office and had my own route for 24 years. I got to know the people and their families on my route. I moonlighted as a painter for many of the people on my postal route.

I have 7 children, 18 grandchildren and 5 great grand children.

I love being in this community. I like being a member of St. Henry's Parish. I am a Lector and sing sometime. I try to help out where I can. I was very surprised to be awarded the Sophia Award in 2005. I was very happy to be called. I am thankful to be able to serve.



Velma Cabell, Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Velma Cabell has been working for Holy Name parish for over 11 years. She started working there when Father Ed Bradley came there as pastor. "I remember when I first knocked on the door and Fr. Bradley answered it and asked me to come in for a talk. He asked me if I could help out a "little". I told him I could do everything but sew. I left there with a job. Now I do all the cooking, cleaning and laundry in the rectory. I also do all the cooking for meetings and special things here at the parish. I have fixed

meals for as many as 200 people at a time. Fr. Bradley just tells me to fix what I think is best. So far it's been working! Said Velma with her beautiful smile. "I didn't want to come in to work and not do everything I saw that needing doing. I don't like lazy people, so I do everything the best I can."

Velma is Baptist and is a member of the Norris Chapel Baptist Church. "Some time's Fr. Bradley will tease me about becoming a Catholic." Said Velma.

"Velma has six children: 4 girls and two boys that she is very proud of. I love my grand children and I enjoy being with them. We all get together at my house for the holidays and have a good time."

Velma told me that Jesus was her everything. "He pulls me up when I am down. He has brought me back up from typhoid fever when I was 18 years old. He gives me strength to do His work for him. I do all I do to the best of my ability for Jesus. I will help anyone I can. It's doesn't matter if we are Baptist or Catholic Jesus is the same for us all. I thank God every day for my health and all that I have."

**William and Mary Blossfeld
St. Henry Parish, Aurora**

"We love it here! We moved from Chicago where I retired from the steel industry. We just wanted to get away from the people and the traffic. Every place was so crowded and it took so long to get around in that area. We were visiting down here and we loved it. We called a Realtor, found some property and here we are! I love to fish and be able to be out doors a lot. I take care of the cemetery here at St. Henry's and I enjoy that. I also lector at mass."

"We will be married 52 years in June, and we have 8 children and 21 grandchildren. We are family oriented and like being around our large family. I like to keep up with politics, I am very interested in it and I like to watch the news."

"William likes to garden and is noted for his spaghetti puree sauce that he makes from his tomatoes. He also cans jellies, pickles and sweet pickle relish. He is most famous for his peanut brittle that he makes for the Fall Festival each year. People ask for it especially. "

(Mary) "I have cancer and my faith and prayers help me through the very down times I have. I pray a lot.

"My greatest blessing is meeting my wife on a blind date."



**Mildred Losee,
St. Henry Parish, Aurora**

"My husband Richard and I had been married 59 years when he died in 2001. We have 4 children, 8 grandchildren and 9 great grand children.

We were from the Chicago area too, and wanted to get away from the fast paced life of a big city. I used to work in banking in Chicago where I did FHA title loans. I went to night classes for chemistry and that's where I met my husband, Richard. We went out and we just "clicked." We got married and then he had to go in the military during WWII. Our son was 15 months old before his dad ever met him.

When I was 34 and our children were in school I went back to college and became a teacher. I taught accounting for about 25 years and then I did guidance counseling.

We had some friends in this area and we visited them and loved it. Richard retired and we came here. Richard helped start this church with Msgr. Hancock and continued to do a lot until he got sick.

I have had to learn to do a lot of things for myself since Richard died. I have become quite a handyman! I really enjoy living in this community it's very welcoming and peaceful. I use to lector at mass but my eye sight got bad so I quit. But I think I am able to start back a little at time. I like to read and put meaning into it like I am talking to the people and not just reading from a book. I count money, help at bible school and the church mission. I have a disabled daughter that takes a good deal of my time. I am glad that I am able to help her though. I love cats and I have six. All were strays and I have had them spayed or neutered.

I was very humbled to received the Sophia Award for the parish 2001. I think one of the greatest things you can bring to a marriage is respect for each other.



Diocesan Action Plan for Implementing USCCB document: Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity

Introduction

Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity is a document published by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) in 2000. The Bishops call us to: recognize our mission as the Church, a conversion of minds and hearts, a communion among groups, a solidarity with the 'stranger among us' and a new evangelization.

"Unity in diversity is the vision that we bishops, as pastors of the Church in the United States, offer to our people as they welcome the new immigrants and refugees who come to our shores. [The immigrants'] diversity of ethnicity, education, and social class challenges us as pastors to welcome these new immigrants and help them join our communities in ways that are respectful of their cultures and in ways that mutually enrich the immigrants and the receiving Church. We reject the anti-immigrant stance that has become popular in different parts of our country, and the nativism, ethnocentricity, and racism that continue to reassert themselves in our communities. 'For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we are all given to drink of one Spirit' (1 Cor 12:13)." "

The Diocese of Owensboro has, in the light of the USCCB document, created an action plan with objectives, action steps and outcomes to further implement this document in our Diocese.

Part II of Action Plan: Setting Diocesan and Parochial Objectives to Enhance Structures and Capacity

The Owensboro Diocesan Action Plan for implementing Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity for the next 5 years, to be evaluated annually, includes the following four objectives: A. Analyze the Current Reality; B. Educate and Raise Awareness; C. Foster Unity and Hospitality; D. Create and Expand Programs for Immigrants and Refugees

A. Analyze the Current Reality

Actions

- Develop and administer a survey for pastors and parish leadership to express their concerns, fears and needs.
- Interview immigrants to find what needs they have and what has been successful in their opinion.
- Complete an in-depth study of the diocesan demographics to find all immigrant and refugee groups using parish censuses, public school databases, local employers and the US Census.
- Regularly convene Immigrant Encuentros, with diocesan leadership present, as a way of gathering information from immigrants about their current struggles, needs and priorities.
- Encourage each parish to identify the immigrant and refugee groups within their boundaries and their needs.

Outcomes

- Obtain an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses present in the parishes and diocese.
- Have data accessible for parishes and diocese to develop plans to meet the needs present.
- Identification of all immigrant and refugee groups in Diocese.
- Greater understanding of the challenges parishes and immigrants face.

B. Educate and Raise Awareness

Actions

- Provide workshops on the Diocesan level for pastors, parish administrators and staff, parish leaders, and diocesan staff about: Unity in Diversity, Cultural Awareness, Multicultural Liturgies, and Christian Hospitality.
- Hold presentations and discussions at Catholic parishes, schools, and universities about the realities of immigrants' lives, different cultures and Welcoming the Stranger Among Us.
- Distribute resources to be used locally with information about cultural and political issues related to immigrants, including the information provided by the USCCB Justice

for Immigrants Campaign.

- Raise awareness of the challenges immigrants and refugees face in learning English and expand language programs for established parishioners and priests to learn a second language.
- Make available videos portraying the various cultures present in the Diocese, displaying their gifts and unique challenges.
- Educate Youth Ministers, Directors of Religious Education programs and Catholic School staff about integrating Unity in Diversity concepts into their classrooms.
- Include Unity in Diversity & Christian Hospitality in Parish Pastoral Council training and provide resources for Hospitality/Outreach Ministries to create a more welcoming space and to educate the entire parish on being more welcoming.
- Provide information to diocesan planning structures, leadership and staff and encourage them to consider the pastoral needs of immigrants and refugees in their planning and development.

Outcomes

- Changed attitudes and increased awareness about the needs and gifts of immigrant and refugee groups.
- Parishes more welcoming to immigrants and refugees and an increase in hospitality ministries in parishes.
- Increased number of bilingual parish staff and volunteers.
- More comprehensive planning and efficient use of diocesan resources.

C. Foster Unity and Hospitality

Actions

- Host an Annual Diocesan Multicultural Celebration, including sharing of stories, food, dance and music of all the cultures present in the Diocese and culminating with a celebration of unity with a truly Multicultural Mass.
- Promote Small Christian Communities and parish participation in National Migration Week and Multicultural Celebrations as a means for mutual sharing and community building
- Create opportunities for immigrants and refugees to be faithful stewards and work alongside the established community in the Diocese and in parishes, including in leadership positions.
- Encourage parishes to use the parish picnic as a showcase for different cultures present in their parish by inviting booths with information, typical dress, music and food from different groups.

Outcomes

- Provide a model of an inclusive, multicultural celebration and mass to be modeled at the parish level.
- Increase in diversity in the parishes, especially among parish leadership.
- More relationships built between established parishioners and newcomers.
- More opportunities present for immigrants to participate in parish life.
- Increase in number of immigrants on committees, councils and leadership teams of the Diocese.
- Immigrants and refugees have equal access to time and space at the parish and an equal voice at the Diocesan level.

D. Create and Expand Programs for Immigrants and Refugees

Actions

- Promote the mission of the Church by asking each parish to identify the needs of immigrant and refugee groups within their boundaries and plan action steps for addressing those needs.
- Compile a database and brochures of community resources, within the Diocese and surrounding area that could assist immigrants and those who work with them.
- Partner with the Diocese of Louisville's Catholic Charities to hold monthly Legal Clinics around the Diocese.
- Explore models that could be duplicated in the Diocese to meet the legal assistance needs of immigrant parishioners.

Continued on page 43



Brescia University's *Contemporary Woman Program* welcomes Dr. Carolyn Hannan, Director of the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, to Brescia University and invites the Owensboro and surrounding community to her presentation.



Date: Thursday, April 6, 2006

Time: 7:00—8:30 p.m.

Place: Taylor Lecture Hall, Science Bldg.

Presentation:

A New World: Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Cost: \$10.00 per person

Contact: Sister Rose Marita O'Bryan
(270) 686-4275

Dr. Carolyn Hannan, a Swedish national, was appointed as Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women on December 1, 2001. She worked for two years as the Principal Officer for Gender Mainstreaming in the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues at the United Nations in New York.

Dr. Hannan has provided advice and support and monitored progress in gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations.

Brescia University now offers Theology courses online

Have you always wanted to take a class in Theology but you don't have the time?

Sign up now for Theology 105, Introduction to the New Testament taught by Father Larry Hostetter, STD. The course begins March 21 at 7:00 p.m. online. Go to www.brescia.edu click on BU Online and follow the links for more information. You can also contact Father Larry directly at (270) 686-4328 or larry.hostetter@brescia.edu

Divine Mercy Sunday More Than A Devotion, A Way Of Life

April 23, 2006 1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Immaculate Church, 2516 Christie Place, Owensboro Ky.

Speaker: Fr. Paul Henry

Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, Talks, Mercy Chaplet, Refreshments

*"Make Known To Souls The Great Mercy That I Have For Them And Exhort Them To Trust In The Bottom-less Depths Of My Mercy."
- St. Faustina Diary # 1567*

Diocesan Action Plan for Implementing USCCB

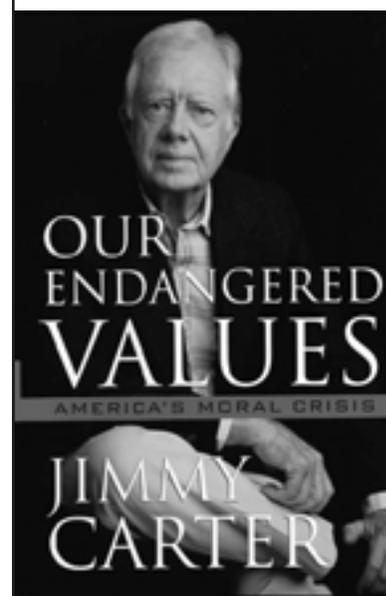
Document: Unity in Diversity (Continued from page 42)

- Encourage Catholic schools to recruit immigrant and minority students by gathering information and support from parishes. Disseminate information, through the media, in other languages about financial assistance available. Investigate long-term solutions for educating Low English Proficient students.
- Develop resources for offering more ESL classes in the parishes and expanding current ESL programs.
- Encourage legislative advocacy on laws that affect immigrants and refugees, as directed by the USCCB Justice for Immigrants Campaign for Immigration Reform.
- Encourage parishes to consider the needs of immigrants and refugees in their development of comprehensive ministry formation and faith development programs, especially the needs of those that are transient and with little formal education.
- Provide resources and ideas for parishes to create programs that help immigrant and refugee youth cope with new cultures, while supporting the parents' role in helping them cope.

Outcomes

- Community resources more accessible to immigrant groups.
- Greater awareness among immigrants about immigration services and eligibility requirements.
- Decrease in number of ineligible immigrants victimized by lawyers and notary publics.
- Increase in immigrant and minority students in Catholic schools, leading to a more diverse learning environment for all students.
- Increase in qualified staff and volunteers working in coordinated efforts on the parish level to meet the needs of immigrants and refugees.
- Increase in the number of parishes offering mass and pastoral care in a second language.
- Increased awareness of struggles and rights of immigrants and refugees.
- More involvement of immigrant and refugee youth and their parents in parish life, a healthier sense of self worth, better integration into the dominant culture, less juvenile delinquency and substance abuse.

America's Endangered Values



A former president warns of endangered values. The most controversial issues being addressed within our nation are discussed in former president Jimmy Carter's latest book, Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis. Using the book as the primary text, participants will explore their own concepts of the endangered values in American life and discuss realistic ways to take those values off the endangered values list. AMERICA'S ENDANGERED VALUES

Facilitator: Rose Marita O'Bryan, OSU

Dates: March 20, 27;

April 3, 10

Time: 6 - 7 p.m.

Cost: \$30.00

For registration or further information, contact Sister Rose



Marita O'Bryan, OSU, Brescia University, 717 Frederica Street, Owensboro, KY 42301 270-686-4275 r rosemarita.obryan@brescia.edu

Presencia de Dios en Retiro en Hopkinsville Por Patti Murphy, directora de ministerio hispano diocesano

El 4 de febrero de 2006 alrededor de 225 hispanos católicos de todas partes de Kentucky occidental, y de Tennessee y Chicago se reunieron para un retiro de catequesis, alabanza y sanación en Hopkinsville. El Padre Antonio Bonilla, un sacerdote conocido por cómo actúa el Espíritu Santo a través de él, llegó a Hopkinsville desde la República Dominicana. También un grupo de jóvenes viajó desde Florida con la Señora Marta Cano, SFO, para animar a los participantes con su talento musical.

El tema principal del retiro, dado por la Señora Marta, fue el perdón. Ella habló no solamente de la importancia de pedir perdón a los demás, pero también de perdonar a otros y a sí mismo. Sin esa sanación espiritual, no está uno preparado para la sanación física. Dijo que al soltar el rencor guardado muy dentro de uno, uno se siente liberado de un estrés que muchas veces ni se da cuenta que tiene. Lo relacionó con sostener a un globo bajo el agua – para mantenerlo bajo el agua requiere un esfuerzo grande y cuando lo suelta duele porque el globo se rompe. Se siente mal uno por un rato, pero después se da cuenta de la fuerza que estaba haciendo y que ahora no tiene que hacer. Se siente uno liberado.

Muchas personas habían llegado con heridas profundas de la vida – causadas por sí mismos, por otras personas y también por las tragedias de la vida. Mucha gente esperó un tiempo largo para ir a la confesión con el Padre Antonio, mientras los demás rezaron la Coronilla de la Divina Misericordia y cantaron alabanzas al Señor.

Terminadas las confesiones, los participantes estaban listos para la Misa. Habían pasado la mañana pidiendo perdón, especialmente a sí mismo, y habían pedido perdón al Señor. Se sentía muy fuerte la presencia del Señor – Padre, Hijo y Espíritu. Todos los que sentían la necesidad pedían sanación de sus pecados, de sus heridas emocionales e incluso enfermedades físicas. Después de la comunión el Padre Antonio nombró las sanaciones que él había sentido y al final de la misa ofreció la unción con óleo bendito para los que querían.

Uno de los participantes me dijo, “Patti lo que me pasó en el retiro realmente fue algo maravilloso para mí.” Él había perdido a su hermano recientemente y cada cosa le recordaba de su hermano. Me contó que solo con ver la mano de



Los participantes del retiro carismático rezando la Coronilla de la Divina Misericordia., Hopkinsville
The participants of the charismatic retreat praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Hopkinsville



Celebración de Nuestra Señora de San Juan de los Lagos en Hopkinsville. El fin de semana del 4 y 5 de febrero fue dedicado a Nuestra Señora de San Juan de los Lagos en la Parroquia de San Pedro y San Pablo. La celebración empezó con oración y formación para los ministros hispanos en la parroquia, un retiro carismático el sábado y un foro de preguntas y respuestas el domingo, seguida por una Misa y una procesión alrededor del terreno de la Iglesia.

su amigo que parecía a la de su hermano le daba ganas de llorar, o con solo escuchar una canción que le gustaba a su hermano le ponía muy triste. Pensó que ya no podía seguir con ese dolor grande de perder a un ser querido. Pero después del retiro dijo, “Me di cuenta que la fe que uno tiene hace las cosas, aún las más difíciles, con solo pedirle a Dios con fe y con amor. A veces nosotros ni tenemos las palabras para expresar nuestras necesidades a Dios, pero él las sabe.”

Dios es tan grande con nosotros. Aunque somos una parte muy pequeña de su creación, se preocupa por nosotros, ve todo lo que nos pasa, y nos quiere liberar de todo lo que está mal. Ese participante sintió el poder que Dios tiene de curar aún las heridas más profundas en nuestras vidas. Dijo, “Dios sanó totalmente el dolor. Mi hermano todavía vive aquí dentro de mí, está presente, pero ahora es diferente. Ahora lo recuerdo con ánimo, y me da ganas de vivir la vida como él siempre me decía y seguir sus consejos.” Él dice que ahora su oración es que Dios sane en la misma forma a toda su familia, especialmente a su mamá y a sus hermanos.

De parte de la Diócesis me gustaría agradecer al Padre Antonio, la Señora Marta y los jóvenes que tocaron por haber venido. Les agradezco también a todos los que ayudaron en la organización del retiro y a la comunidad de la parroquia de Santos Pedro y Pablo por haber invitado a todos. Sé que la experiencia de ese participante fue sólo una de las muchas experiencias de sanación que hubo durante el retiro. Espero que todos los que sintieron la presencia de Dios en el retiro puedan sentirla cada día más fuerte y formar parte de una comunidad católica buena para seguir conociéndole más a Dios.

Nuestro Santo Padre nos pide ayudar a otros

Mis queridos amigos,

La Cuaresma está muy próxima y necesitamos pasar algún tiempo considerando, cómo nos prepararemos para este tiempo tan especial del año litúrgico. Comenzamos por dar la bienvenida a los catecúmenos y candidatos en formar parte de la comunidad católica, nuestras parroquias, diócesis e Iglesia Universal.

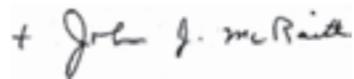
Los catecúmenos y candidatos se están preparando para convertirse en Católicos y recibir los sacramentos: Bautismo, Confirmación y la Eucaristía para los catecúmenos; Confirmación y la Eucaristía para los candidatos. Como ustedes también ya saben, los candidatos han sido ya bautizados. Los catecúmenos y candidatos recibirán los sacramentos de iniciación en la noche del sábado santo, es decir, en la Vigilia pascual.

Nosotros les damos la bienvenida y nos unimos a ellos en la preparación para la celebración del Misterio Pascual. Juntos nos preparamos para celebrar ésta, la fiesta más grande del año litúrgico – el sufrimiento, muerte y resurrección de Jesucristo. Es importante que nos preparemos adecuadamente para la llegada de la pascua. Esta preparación algunas veces será individual y otras un esfuerzo comunitario.

La Cuaresma es un tiempo especial de oración, penitencia y caridad. Estos aspectos son esenciales en la adecuada preparación de la gran alegría pascual en la que Jesús nos muestra su infinito amor. Por nosotros, Él sufre, muere y triunfa sobre el pecado y la muerte por medio de la resurrección.

Ahora me gustaría compartir con ustedes la carta de nuestro amadísimo Santo Padre, El Papa Benedicto XVI. Él escribe este bellissimo mensaje cuaresmal a todo el mundo y a cada uno de nosotros de forma individual. Tómense por favor un poco de tiempo para leer y reflexionar sus inspiradoras palabras a continuación.

Deseándoles la bendición de Dios, permanezco



Reverendísimo John J. McRaith
Obispo de la Diócesis de Owensboro

Mensaje Del Santo Padre Benedicto XVI Para La Cuaresma 2006

“Al ver Jesús a las gentes se compadecía de ellas” (Mt 9,36)

Amadísimos hermanos y hermanas:

La Cuaresma es el tiempo privilegiado de la peregrinación interior hacia Aquél que es la fuente de la misericordia. Es una peregrinación en la que Él mismo nos acompaña a través del desierto de nuestra pobreza, sosteniéndonos en el camino hacia la alegría intensa de la Pascua. Incluso en el «valle oscuro» del que habla el salmista (Sal 23,4), mientras el tentador nos mueve a desesperarnos o a confiar de manera ilusoria en nuestras propias fuerzas, Dios nos guarda y nos sostiene. Efectivamente, hoy el Señor escucha también el grito de las multitudes hambrientas de alegría, de paz y de amor. Como en todas las épocas, se sienten abandonadas. Sin embargo, en la desolación de la miseria, de la soledad, de la violencia y del hambre, que afectan sin distinción a ancianos, adultos y niños, Dios nos permite que predomine la oscuridad del horror. En efecto, como escribió mi amado predecesor Juan Pablo II, hay un «límite impuesto al mal por el bien divino», y es la misericordia (Memoria e identidad, 29 ss.). En este sentido he querido poner al inicio de este Mensaje la cita evangélica según la cual «Al ver Jesús a las gentes se compadecía de ellas» (Mt 9,36). A este respecto deseo reflexionar sobre una cuestión muy debatida en la actualidad: el problema del desarrollo. La «mirada» conmovida de Cristo se detiene también hoy sobre los hombres y los pueblos, puesto que por el «proyecto» divino todos están llamados a la salvación. Jesús, ante las insidias que se oponen a este proyecto, se compadece de las multitudes: las defiende de los lobos, aun a costa de su vida. Con su mirada, Jesús abraza a las multitudes y a cada uno, y los entrega al Padre, ofreciéndose a sí mismo en sacrificio de

La Colecta del Miércoles de Ceniza es muy Especial

Mis queridos amigos,

La Iglesia enseña que mucha de la preparación para la celebración de la Pascua tiene que ver con la oración, la penitencia y la caridad. Colectas muy especiales durante la Cuaresma ofrecen sin duda una variedad de oportunidades para ejercer la caridad. De forma muy especial, me gustaría invitarlos a ser generosos en la colecta especial del miércoles de ceniza, la cual será destinada para asistir a los pobres de la diócesis de Mandeville, Jamaica.

En ediciones previas de esta publicación, quizás ustedes hayan leído bastante acerca de cómo su generosidad ha hecho una real diferencia en las vidas de los pobres en Mandeville, el segundo país más pobre del hemisferio occidental.

Un grupo de católicos de nuestra diócesis ha viajado a Mandeville para asistir en la construcción de casas y ayudar a las personas de otras formas. Aquellos que han hecho el sacrificio de compartir su tiempo y talentos con la diócesis de Mandeville pueden decirles de las grandes necesidades presentes ahí.

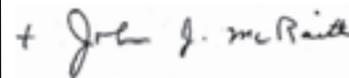
Como si nuestros hermanos y hermanas en Mandeville no hubieran tenido suficiente sufrimiento, fueron golpeados repetidamente por huracanes en esta pasada temporada de huracanes. Este fue un golpe devastador, particularmente considerando que en la temporada del 2004, el huracán Iván dañó al menos dos tercios de sus estructuras diocesanas.

En nuestro propio país en este pasado año, ustedes han sido extremadamente generosos con las víctimas del tornado y estoy seguro que serán igualmente generosos con nuestra diócesis hermana en Mandeville. Soy muy bendecido de ser el Obispo de una diócesis donde los fieles entienden que cuando hacemos algo por el más pequeño de los hijos de Dios, lo estamos haciendo por Jesús. Este mandamiento de Dios es ciertamente una parte esencial de nuestras vidas de fe y ustedes han mostrado gran fe por medio de su increíble generosidad.

Como lo mencioné, hay varias colectas importantes en la Cuaresma, así que este es el momento de cumplir al menos con dos de los mandamientos que la Iglesia ha establecido para todos nosotros durante la Cuaresma: Específicamente, oración y caridad.

Que Dios bendiga a todos y cada uno de ustedes por ser tan bondadosos, y generosos con aquellos que tienen gran necesidad incluso de lo más básico para vivir. Su recompensa en el cielo será grande; de hecho, esa es su recompensa- LA VIDA ETERNA con DIOS.

Sinceramente en Cristo,



Reverendísimo John. J. McRaith
Obispo de la Diócesis de Owensboro

expiación.

La Iglesia, iluminada por esta verdad pascual, es consciente de que, para promover un desarrollo integral, es necesario que nuestra «mirada» sobre el hombre se asemeje a la de Cristo. En efecto, de ningún modo es posible dar respuesta a las necesidades materiales y sociales de los hombres sin colmar, sobre todo, las profundas necesidades de su corazón. Esto debe subrayarse con mayor fuerza en nuestra época de grandes transformaciones, en la que percibimos de manera cada vez más viva y urgente nuestra responsabilidad ante los pobres del mundo. Ya mi venerado predecesor, el Papa Pablo VI, identificaba los efectos del subdesarrollo como un deterioro de humanidad. En este sentido, en la encíclica *Populorum progressio* denunciaba «las carencias materiales de los que están privados del mínimo vital y las carencias morales de los que están mutilados por el egoísmo... las estructuras opresoras que provienen del abuso del tener o del abuso del poder, de las explotaciones de los trabajadores o de la injusticia de las transacciones» (n. 21). Como antídoto

Sigue en la página 4

Celebración del Día de los Reyes Magos y Día de la Candelaria

Por Edie Keeney

Para la mayoría de los cristianos la temporada navideña incluye los cuatro domingos anteriores a la navidad, los cuales llamamos de adviento. Adviento es un tiempo de meditación privilegiada para los cristianos en espera del nacimiento del niño Jesús. Enseguida del 25 de diciembre, seguido por los doce días de Navidad, llegamos al 6 de enero, el cual conocemos como "Epifanía" o "Día de los Reyes Magos". Este día festivo y religioso se originó en la historia según la ley antigua de los judíos, donde era requerido que todo primogénito fuera presentado y consagrado en el templo de Jerusalén. Así pues, María y José siguiendo la costumbre judía presentaron al niño Jesús en el templo Jerusalén.

En América Latina, la temporada de Navidad termina el día de la Candelaria, que se celebra el 2 de febrero, cuarenta días después de Navidad. Tradicionalmente, la epifanía es el tiempo en que los niños al despertar encuentran regalos debajo del árbol de Navidad donde se encuentra el nacimiento con el niño Jesús. Siguiendo nuestra tradición hispana servimos una gran cena compartiéndola con familiares y amigos, enseguida escogemos un anfitrión para la fiesta de la Candelaria.

Como podemos observar, la comunidad hispana esta creciendo en el área, por lo que se aprenden las costumbres y cultura norteamericana. De la misma forma ellos también desean compartir las costumbres y cultura. Al compartir de forma mutua esto nos conduce a un mejor entendimiento y enriquecimiento de nuestras culturas. La tradición de estas fiestas proviene de sus raíces religiosas, las cuales son por la buena influencia de familias para conservar grandes valores. La celebración del día de la Candelaria es parte de la tradición navideña. En el día de los Reyes, 6 de enero; cada miembro de familia escoge su anfitrión para prolongar la fiesta. La figura del divino niño Jesús es abrigado en la familia. La natividad desde el 6 de enero se pone en reposo hasta el día de la Candelaria. Los niños representan los tres Reyes Magos, remueven el niño Jesús y lo visten con trajes especiales y luego lo colocan en su pedestal para que repose hasta el adviento del siguiente año. Los participantes llevan regalos y frutas. El anfitrión ofrece comida típica de su país y ofrecen música. Baile folclórico es tradicional y parte de la fiesta. José Romero y Victoria Sánchez y familia son los anfitriones de la fiesta este año el 11 de Febrero.

Mi esposo y yo llegamos a la casa de los Sánchez para celebrar el Día de los Tres Reyes con su familia y amigos. Mientras llegaba un grupo grande había mucha plática y los preparativos continuaban. El rico aroma nos llevó a la cocina donde había grandes ollas de pozole calentando y platos de tamales que la verdad nos sacaron "hambrita". Cuando todo estaba listo, el grupo fue a un garaje ar-



Un niño llevando la imagen del Niño Jesús. Edie Keeney photo

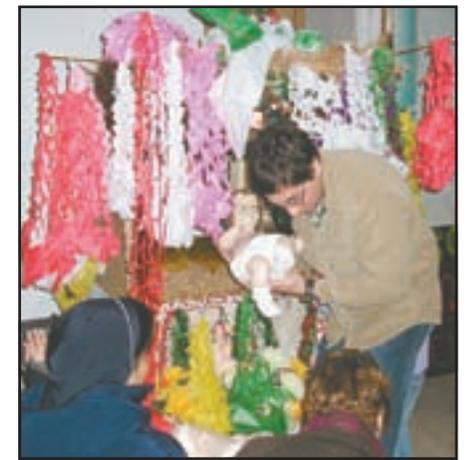
reglado donde había mesas y sillas colocadas alrededor de la sala. Las imágenes de la natividad estaban exhibidas en un gran pesebre adornado. Todos se juntaron alrededor de la escena de natividad para rezar el rosario juntos. Después del rosario, un niño y un joven, representando a los Tres Reyes, sacaron imágenes del niño Jesús del pesebre, las vistieron en ropa blanca bonita y las llevaron en toda la sala donde toda las personas besaban a las imágenes del bebé.

Alguien prendió la música y llegó la hora de comenzar la celebración, hasta ese momento el ambiente era sólo de oración. Una de las mujeres tiró papel picado en la cabeza de cada persona para indicar que era celebración. Los invitados habían traído bolsas de fruta, que ahora pusieron en las mesas junto a los platos de pozole caliente. Después de la comida, los bailables tradicionales empezaron. Un niño de dos años, vestido en un traje mexicano tradicional llevando a un bastón de madera, empezó la danza. La danza fue muy complicada; hubiera sido difícil para un niño más grande o un adulto realizar todos los pasos a tiempo con la música, pero el niño pareció no tener ningún problema. Cuando terminó su danza la puerta se abrió y 3 hombres y un niño entraron vestidos en los mismo trajes tradicionales pero con sus caras cubiertas con máscaras plásticas de las caras de viejitos. Ellos también se apoyaron en bastones de madera. El Baile de los Viejitos empezó lentamente pero iba aumentando en ritmo e intensidad, mientras parecían ganar fuerza y vigor siendo inspirados por su fe en el Niño Jesús, según la tradición. Había dos cruces que habían sido

Católico de Kentucky Occidental, Marzo, 2006 **3**

decoradas con ropa y telas de la casa que las mujeres habían bordado. Esas fueron llevadas por los dos, quienes habían representado a los Reyes, en una danza lenta alrededor de la sala. Es la tradición dar regalos durante esta celebración. Las cosas en las cruces fueron regalos para el joven y el niño. Regalos de fruta, tamales y pan dulce en la forma de un pájaro fueron dados a cada familia cuando salían de la celebración. Las imágenes del Niño Jesús serán colocadas en pedestales en las casas de las familias hasta el próximo Adviento.

Mi esposo y yo sentimos realmente honrados de ser acogidos en su casa y compartir en su celebración navideña tradicional. Con mucho de lo que hacemos aquí en los EEUU empezando tan temprano antes del 25 y terminando el día después de la Navidad solemos olvidar que el tiempo de Navidad realmente empieza el 25 de diciembre y termina después de la Epifanía o 40 días después de la Navidad como en Latinoamérica. La preparación espiritual que da sentido al Adviento muchas veces se pierde en el ambiente caótico que es tan común aquí en los EEUU. Anoche fue un ejemplo del sentido verdadero del tiempo de la Navidad.



John quitando el Niño Jesús del pesebre. Edie Keeney Photo



Dos "viejitos" bailando. Edie Keeney Photo

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Mensaje Del Santo Padre Benedicto XVI

(*Signe de la página 2*)

contra estos males, Pablo VI no sólo sugería «el aumento en la consideración de la dignidad de los demás, la orientación hacia el espíritu de pobreza, la cooperación en el bien común, la voluntad de la paz», sino también «el reconocimiento, por parte del hombre, de los valores supremos y de Dios, que de ellos es la fuente y el fin» (ib.). En esta línea, el Papa no dudaba en proponer «especialmente, la fe, don de Dios, acogido por la buena voluntad de los hombres, y la unidad de la caridad de Cristo» (ib.). Por tanto, la «mirada» de Cristo sobre la muchedumbre nos mueve a afirmar los verdaderos contenidos de ese «humanismo pleno» que, según el mismo Pablo VI, consiste en el «desarrollo integral de todo el hombre y de todos los hombres» (ib., n. 42). Por eso, la primera contribución que la Iglesia ofrece al desarrollo del hombre y de los pueblos no se basa en medios materiales ni en soluciones técnicas, sino en el anuncio de la verdad de Cristo, que forma las conciencias y muestra la auténtica dignidad de la persona y del trabajo, promoviendo la creación de una cultura que responda verdaderamente a todos los interrogantes del hombre.

Ante los terribles desafíos de la pobreza de gran parte de la humanidad, la indiferencia y el encerrarse en el propio egoísmo aparecen como un contraste intolerable frente a la «mirada» de Cristo. El ayuno y la limosna, que, junto con la oración, la Iglesia propone de modo especial en el período de Cuaresma, son una ocasión propicia para conformarnos con esa «mirada». Los ejemplos de los santos y las numerosas experiencias misioneras que caracterizan la historia de la Iglesia son indicaciones valiosas para sostener del mejor modo posible el desarrollo. Hoy, en el contexto de la interdependencia global, se puede constatar que ningún proyecto económico, social o político puede sustituir el don de uno mismo a los demás en el que se expresa la caridad. Quien actúa según esta lógica evangélica vive la fe como amistad con el Dios encarnado y, como Él, se preocupa por las necesidades materiales y

espirituales del prójimo. Lo mira como un misterio incommensurable, digno de infinito cuidado y atención. Sabe que quien no da a Dios, da demasiado poco; como decía a menudo la beata Teresa de Calcuta: «la primera pobreza de los pueblos es no conocer a Cristo». Por esto es preciso ayudar a descubrir a Dios en el rostro misericordioso de Cristo: sin esta perspectiva, no se construye una civilización sobre bases sólidas.

Gracias a hombres y mujeres obedientes al Espíritu Santo, han surgido en la Iglesia muchas obras de caridad, dedicadas a promover el desarrollo: hospitales, universidades, escuelas de formación profesional, pequeñas empresas. Son iniciativas que han demostrado, mucho antes que otras actuaciones de la sociedad civil, la sincera preocupación hacia el hombre por parte de personas movidas por el mensaje evangélico. Estas obras indican un camino para guiar aún hoy el mundo hacia una globalización que ponga en el centro el verdadero bien del hombre y, así, lleve a la paz auténtica. Con la misma compasión de Jesús por las muchedumbres, la Iglesia siente también hoy que su tarea propia consiste en pedir a quien tiene responsabilidades políticas y ejerce el poder económico y financiero que promueva un desarrollo basado en el respeto de la dignidad de todo hombre. Una prueba importante de este esfuerzo será la efectiva libertad religiosa, entendida no sólo como posibilidad de anunciar y celebrar a Cristo, sino también de contribuir a la edificación de un mundo animado por la caridad. En este esfuerzo se inscribe también la consideración efectiva del papel central que los auténticos valores religiosos desempeñan en la vida del hombre, como respuesta a sus interrogantes más profundos y como motivación ética respecto a sus responsabilidades personales y sociales. Basándose en estos criterios, los cristianos deben aprender a valorar también con sabiduría los programas de sus gobernantes.

No podemos ocultar que muchos que profesaban ser discípulos de Jesús han cometido errores a lo largo de la historia. Con frecuencia,

ante problemas graves, han pensado que primero se debía mejorar la tierra y después pensar en el cielo. La tentación ha sido considerar que, ante necesidades urgentes, en primer lugar se debía actuar cambiando las estructuras externas. Para algunos, la consecuencia de esto ha sido la transformación del cristianismo en moralismo, la sustitución del creer por el hacer. Por eso, mi predecesor de venerada memoria, Juan Pablo II, observó con razón: «La tentación actual es la de reducir el cristianismo a una sabiduría meramente humana, casi como una ciencia del vivir bien. En un mundo fuertemente secularizado, se ha dado una “gradual secularización de la salvación”, debido a lo cual se lucha ciertamente en favor del hombre, pero de un hombre a medias, reducido a la mera dimensión horizontal. En cambio, nosotros sabemos que Jesús vino a traer la salvación integral» (Enc. Redemptoris missio, 11).

Teniendo en cuenta la victoria de Cristo sobre todo mal que oprime al hombre, la Cuaresma nos quiere guiar precisamente a esta salvación integral. Al dirigirnos al divino Maestro, al convertirnos a Él, al experimentar su misericordia gracias al sacramento de la Reconciliación, descubriremos una «mirada» que nos escruta en lo más hondo y puede reanimar a las multitudes y a cada uno de nosotros. Devuelve la confianza a cuantos no se cierran en el escepticismo, abriendo ante ellos la perspectiva de la salvación eterna. Por tanto, aunque parezca que domine el odio, el Señor no permite que falte nunca el testimonio luminoso de su amor. A María, «fuente viva de esperanza» (Dante Alighieri, Paraíso, XXXIII, 12), le encomiendo nuestro camino cuaresmal, para que nos lleve a su Hijo. A ella le encomiendo, en particular, las muchedumbres que aún hoy, probadas por la pobreza, invocan su ayuda, apoyo y comprensión. Con estos sentimientos, imparto a todos de corazón una especial Bendición Apostólica.

Vaticano, 29 de septiembre de 2005.

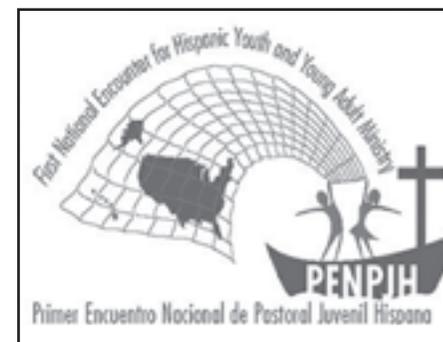
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Jóvenes Hablan, la Iglesia Escucha

Por Patti Murphy, directora de ministerio hispano diocesano

Por primera vez en la nación los jóvenes hispanos católicos están juntando sus voces para informar a la Iglesia Católica de sus aspiraciones, necesidades y contribuciones. En todo el país se han reunido grupos de jóvenes hispanos que tienen desde 14 a 26 años y sus asesores adultos para participar en el proceso del Encuentro que va a concluir con el Primer Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana (PENPJH) en Junio de este año. El proceso empezó en las parroquias en el verano del 2005 y aquí en la Diócesis de Owensboro participaron 93 jóvenes en 5 parroquias. Cada grupo reflexionó sobre los temas del Encuentro: El Encuentro con Jesucristo Vivo, El Camino de la Conversión, El Camino para la Comunión, El Camino para la Solidaridad, y Jesús nos Envía a la Misión. En cada sesión los jóvenes compartieron sus opiniones, sus dificultades, sus dones, y la realidad que viven aquí en este país.

Al final de ese proceso parroquial, cada parroquia mandó delegados al Encuentro Diocesano para compartir sus respuestas. Al juntar todas las respuestas de cada parroquia, los delegados las analizaron. Después de estudiar más sobre la pastoral juvenil hispana, sacaron conclusiones sobre la realidad diocesana de los jóvenes hispanos. Teniendo en cuenta esa realidad dieron sugerencias sobre acciones pastorales en las parroquias y en la Diócesis. Si usted quiere ver los resultados y fotos del Encuentro Diocesano puede visitar esta página web: http://www.owensborodio.org/hispanic/Diocesan-Office/Events/Encuentro2005_Spanish.html



Aquí en la región del sureste, 22 diócesis (de las 30 diócesis que hay) han participado en ese proceso. Ahora esas 22 diócesis van a mandar sus delegados al Encuentro Regional en

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Reglas de la Cuaresma Católica:

Para los católicos, la Cuaresma es una época de oración, ayuno y caridad en la preparación para la renovación de la promesa bautismal en la Pascua. Empieza en el miércoles de ceniza cuando todos son llamados a alejarse del pecado y ser fieles al evangelio. La Cuaresma finaliza justo antes de la misa vespertina de la Última Cena del Señor en jueves santo. La cúspide del año litúrgico es el Triduo Pascual, los tres días de celebración del Misterio Pascual. El Triduo Pascual inicia con la misa de la Última Cena en jueves santo, continúa con la celebración de la Pasión y Muerte de Jesucristo en el viernes santo, y llega al clímax en la vigilia de la Pascua en el sábado santo y se completa con las liturgias del domingo de Pascua. Los cincuenta días del tiempo de Pascua, desde el domingo de Pascua hasta Pentecostés, es un tiempo de gozo y celebración por la resurrección de la muerte de Cristo y nuestro bautismo en la vida como discípulos.

Las siguientes reglas de ayudo y abstinencia se observan durante la Cuaresma. Los católicos no se deberían excusar con ligereza de estas mínimas prácticas penitenciales prescritas.

Reglas de la Cuaresma

- **Días de Abstinencia:** La abstinencia de carne se observa en miércoles de Ceniza (1 de Marzo) viernes santo (14 de abril) y todos los viernes de Cuaresma por todos los católicos de 14 años y mayores.
- **Días de Ayuno:** El ayuno se observa en el miércoles de Ceniza y el viernes santo por todos los católicos mayores de 18 años de edad y menores de 60 años. Aquellos obligados por esta regla pueden tomar sólo una comida completa sin carne. Se permiten dos pequeñas comidas según sea necesario para mantener la fuerza de acuerdo con la necesidad de cada uno, pero comer alimentos sólidos entre comidas no se permite. Sin embargo, son permitidos líquidos, incluyendo leche y jugos de fruta. Cuando la salud o la habilidad para trabajar pudieran estar seriamente afectadas, la ley no les obliga.
- **Obligación de Pascua...** Aquellos que han sido iniciados en la Eucaristía (recibieron la Primera Comunión) deben recibir la Santa Comunión al menos una vez al año durante la época de Pascua. El tiempo de cumplir nuestro deber de la Pascua se extiende desde el primer domingo de Cuaresma hasta el domingo de la Trinidad. Aquellos que están en situación de pecado grave están obligados también a ir a confesarse al menos una vez por año.

Durante la época de Cuaresma, todos estamos llamados a aceptar la penitencia y a hacer trabajos de caridad que reflejen nuestra voluntad de conversión de todo corazón. Oración, ayuno y dar caridad son las marcas de los católicos que entran en la época de Cuaresma para prepararse para la renovación de su compromiso bautismal en la Pascua. Además de lo que la Iglesia requiere, considere cómo usted se preparará para la renovación de la Pascua esta época de Cuaresma. Que esta Cuaresma nos conduzca a todos a una profunda unión en Cristo y de uno con otro.

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Atlanta, Georgia del 24 a 26 de marzo. A nuestra Diócesis nos toca 15 puestos para mandar delegados del grupo que participó en el proceso diocesano. En total van a ser 600 jóvenes y asesores adultos que van a analizar los resultados de todos los Encuentros Diocesanos y priorizar las sugerencias.

Después del Encuentro Regional, más que 125 Diócesis van a mandar delegados que han participado en cada nivel del proceso al Encuentro Nacional en Notre Dame, Indiana del 8 a 11 de junio. Nuestra Diócesis tiene puestos para 6 delegados. Esos delegados van a llevar las voces de todos los 93 jóvenes que participaron de nuestra Diócesis para que sean escuchadas en la etapa final del proceso. El objetivo general del PENPJH es involucrar a los jóvenes hispanos y al liderazgo de la pastoral hispana y del youth and young adult ministry en un proceso de encuentro-conversión-comunión-solidaridad y misión, que promueva la participación activa, entusiasta y corresponsable de la juventud hispana en la vida y misión de la Iglesia en Estados Unidos. Si usted quiere más información sobre el Encuentro puede ver esta página: <http://www.laredpjh.org/esp/encounterHome.html>

Aquí en la región del Sureste hay una forma en que todos los jóvenes hispanos pueden seguir profundizando los temas del proceso del Encuentro. Hay un libro, escrito por jóvenes hispanos aquí en el Sureste, que tiene sesiones de

Vocación

Por **Cristóbal Gutiérrez**

Primeramente un saludo de afecto de mi parte a todos ustedes que tienen el gusto por leer este medio. Segundo, gracias igualmente por el sacrificio en leerme a mí en esta ocasión. No sé que piensen ustedes, pero yo siempre he CREÍDO que una de las cosas que hace más feliz a todo hombre y mujer en este mundo es ¡ Vivir de lo que se ama! Dichosos sin duda todos los que saben adónde van, qué es lo que quieren y para qué viven en este mundo. Y es que, nos guste o no. Todos los cuestionamientos en torno al plan de nuestra existencia nos conducen siempre a la pregunta fundamental: ¿Cuál es nuestra vocación?

Vivir de lo que se ama significa, sentirse realizado, contento y feliz respondiendo a esa vocación que cada uno tenemos. Es triste pero cierto, que muchas de las veces cuando uno platica con la gente muchos no esta contentos en sus trabajos. Son maestros, pero sueñan con ser veterinarios; médicos, pero sueñan con ser astronautas; sacerdotes pero sueñan con casarse o andar en la política; albañiles, pero quieren ser presidentes, etc. A un mundo que en su mayoría ya no le encuentra sentido al sacrificio ni al compromiso duradero, le cuesta mucho trabajo responder a la vocación propia. Muchos son los que han reducido o querido suplir vocación con la simple profesión. Pero claro, en una sociedad tan pragmática y hedonista, donde se cultivan y gradúan cada año más esclavos de la técnica y las ciencias, de poco interés resulta prestarle atención a eso de la

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vocación. En otras palabras lo que más importa hoy en día es dedicarse a aquello que “deja \$\$\$” y mucho si se puede. Eso de prestarle atención a la vocación y demás valores trascendentales ya pasaron de moda.

Todos en este mundo hemos sido llamados y esto es lo que significa tener “Vocación.” Primero fuimos llamados a vivir, hemos sido llamados al amor, e igualmente hemos sido llamados a realizarnos en algo muy concreto en este mundo. Y ¿saben quién es el que llama? Nada mas, ni nada menos que Dios, nuestro Creador. Es cierto. Ustedes y yo haciendo uso de nuestra libertad, otro regalo de parte de Dios, podemos cambiar el rumbo y rechazar el plan original de Dios en nuestras vidas. Pero también recuerden que al acercarse el final de nuestro peregrinar en este mundo, es posible que un sentimiento de vacío y de infelicidad de no haber tenido el coraje, la valentía y la decisión necesarias para descubrir y perseguir eso para lo que habíamos nacido nos cubra con su sombra.

Ustedes y yo hemos sido llamados. Por más pequeño que sea aquello para lo que hemos nacido en este mundo persigámoslo con ahínco y esfuerzo. Descubrir y responder a nuestra vocación no es cosa fácil. A Jesús tampoco se le hizo tan fácil responder a la suya aquel día de camino al calvario. Muchas veces de igual modo nuestro caminar por este mundo parece cuesta arriba. Pero el que encuentra su vocación, aún sabiendo que quizás no vivirá muy cómodo en este mundo, aún así, si vivirá muy feliz y realizado.

reflexiones para la Cuaresma que tratan los mismos temas del Encuentro. Cada año los jóvenes escriben un libro de la Pascua Juvenil, este año el libro se llama Tejiendo el Futuro Juntos: Hacia el Gran Encuentro con el Hombre Nuevo. La Pascua Juvenil es una manera de ir conociendo y viviendo el gran misterio de la vida, pasión, muerte y resurrección de Jesús. Hay seis sesiones que un grupo de jóvenes puede hacer durante las seis semanas de la Cuaresma (que empieza con el miércoles de ceniza el 1 de marzo). Cada capítulo tiene las siguientes partes sobre el tema: Introducción, Dinámicas, Diálogos, Palabra de Dios, La Iglesia Dice, Hechos de Vida, Reflexiones, Canciones, Actividades, Proyectos, Oración y Evaluación. Si usted está interesado en participar o ayudar en esas reflexiones hable con las personas encargadas en su parroquia. Ellos me pueden contactar para conseguir los libros si hay un grupo de jóvenes interesados.

Les pido a todos que recen por los jóvenes hispanos de nuestra Diócesis y en todo el país, especialmente durante los pasos finales de este proceso de Encuentro. Los jóvenes hispanos en este país tienen una realidad única y por la primera vez han podido expresar esa realidad a la Iglesia. El Encuentro Nacional sí va a ser el final de este proceso, pero también va a ser el principio de una pastoral juvenil hispana que verdaderamente coincide con su realidad.